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**Doctor of Philosophy**

**by**

**Appreciating Relational Knowledge Management within the  
Queensland Music Festival –  
An Ethnographic Approach to Understanding  
Knowledge Management Practices**

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## *Abstract*

Effective knowledge management can provide a competitive advantage for festival organisations. Conventional knowledge management approaches to event and festival studies have identified documenting and storing knowledge in databases, checklists and evaluation reports. Drawing upon new insights in the knowledge management literature, I focus on the relational and practice-based dimension of knowledge management and apply an Appreciative Inquiry approach.

In this thesis, I argue that relational knowledge management is storied, embodied and practised by organisational members throughout the entire festival life cycle. Festival organisers can hence benefit from understanding the importance of creating and maintaining a culture where all members of the organisation are able to collaborate and engage in meaning-making. Within the complex festival environment, however, time is limited for building a shared understanding among the team (permanent and seasonal staff, volunteers, board members, contractors and artists). A practice-based understanding of knowledge management therefore emphasises the history, context, and culture within which festival members perform their roles, engage in their work practices and co-create the festival experience.

The Queensland Music Festival (QMF), the case study for this project, is a professionally run and highly successful festival organisation both in terms of creative output as well as internal operational strategies. This study therefore addresses the question of how the Queensland Music Festival's approach to knowledge management contributes to its success as a festival organisation. The research employs an interpretive, reflexive methodology and ethnographic methods. I make visible stories and narratives of success and highlight how these strengths can be used to further enhance the success of the organisation. Underpinned by an Appreciative Inquiry approach and social constructionist understanding of knowledge management, I identify the knowledge management practices and power/knowledge relations that shape the festival organisation.

The findings from this study highlight how QMF's collaborative organisational culture and interdisciplinary team structure enhance relational knowledge management throughout the festival life cycle. Both provide a common ground for knowledge to be constructed and practised within the team and contribute to festival members' 'know how' that enables them to effectively work together. Furthermore, the QMF vision and community cultural development ethos shape knowledge practices in working with members of different communities and co-creating performances. I make explicit QMF festival members' identification with the festival and its principles, and provide an opportunity for QMF to reflect upon their taken for granted practices in working with each other and with members of communities. A critical reflection on these practices by organisational members can enhance organisational learning and QMF's innovative and competitive capacity in the long term.

*Originality Statement*

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree or diploma in any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, the thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the thesis itself.

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Raphaela Stadler

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Stadler, R., Fullagar, S. & Reid, S. (in press): The professionalisation of festival organisations: A relational approach to knowledge management, *Event Management*, 18(1)

Stadler, R., Reid, S. & Fullagar, S. (2013): An ethnographic exploration of knowledge practices within the Queensland Music Festival, *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 4(2), 90–106

Stadler, R. (2013): Power relations and the production of new knowledge within a Queensland Music Festival community cultural development project, *Annals of Leisure Research*, 16(1), 87–102

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Stadler, R. (2011): *Rethinking Knowledge Management in Music Festivals—Individual Roles and Responsibilities*, ANZALS Conference 6-8 December 2011, Dunedin, NZ

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Included in this thesis are papers in Chapters 4.3, 6.2 and 6.3 for which I am the sole author. The bibliographic details for these papers are:

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Additionally included in the thesis are papers in Chapters 5.3.2, 6.2, 6.3 and 7.2 which are co-authored with other researchers. My contribution to each co-authored paper is outlined at the front of the relevant chapter. The bibliographic details for these papers, including all authors, are:

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\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Raphaela Stadler

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Simone Fullagar

## Chapter One: Introduction

### *1.1 Personal Background*

My background in festival management has inspired me to do this study.<sup>1</sup> I first became involved in organising festivals in 2006, when working as a marketing intern with the Colorado Music Festival in Boulder. This experience inspired me to do a ‘Magister’ thesis (University of Innsbruck, Austria) on the topic of communities-of-practice in festival organisations, and thus provided the impetus for exploring knowledge management in music festival organisations. In 2008, I worked for the Innsbruck Festival of Early Music as an administrative assistant, then as an artist manager with the same festival in 2009. Even though I was working for the same festival, it turned out to be a challenge as I took on different roles. I could build on what I had learned the year before, but the context was completely different; not all the previous knowledge was relevant. On the other hand, I had a better understanding of the entire organisation than some of my co-workers. Particularly through the first position I gained insight into the administrative elements of festival management, whereas the second position focused on the artistic side. Reflecting upon these experiences I started questioning how the success of festivals is connected to the practice of knowledge management. How could knowledge management be improved among the diverse group of experts coming together for only a short period of time? And, above all, how can the organisations ensure that they learn over time even though most staff members leave once the festival is over?

With those initial questions in mind, I then moved to Australia to start my PhD. In order to gain further insight into different cultural contexts that shape festival management, I volunteered for several festivals in Brisbane between August and

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<sup>1</sup> In ethnographic writing it is common to use the first person as the author aims to recount her personal experiences and understanding, as well as to represent the self in the text (Coffey, 1999; Holliday, 2007).

October 2010, which extended my understanding of the volunteer-side of being part of a festival. This led to yet more questions, as I started to understand the importance of including not only permanent and seasonal staff but also volunteers and other members of the festival in the knowledge management process. I wanted to explore the different relationships and ways of communication between all members of the organisation that underpin effective knowledge management. I also began to realise that all festival organisational cultures are different, yet these shape knowledge management processes and practices in various ways.

At the AUSfolk convention in Woodford in September 2010 I met Deborah Conway (then Artistic Director of the Queensland Music Festival) and Nigel Lavender (Executive Director). I listened to their presentation titled *How does the festival that doesn't play together stay together?* I was able to identify the Queensland Music Festival as an excellent case study for my research into knowledge management. Fortunately, they both were enthusiastic and QMF was happy to co-operate with the project. This opportunity enabled me to put my personal experience into an academic context, to critically question the conceptualisation of knowledge management and organisational learning within the context of QMF.

## ***1.2 Music Festivals in Australia***

Festivals—and music festivals in particular—are an important part of Australian culture and lifestyle. They are a form of cultural entertainment, but even more importantly, they are an engaging leisure experience for participants (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Deeply rooted in the history of Australia, and influenced by Australian arts policy as well as the community arts movement, music festivals today present a wide variety of genres, styles and tastes, and attract tourists and locals alike. Music festivals thus are an important part of the Australian culture, leisure and tourism industry (Lynch & Veal, 2006).



Often there is no clear distinction made between a festival and events in general, which stems from the problem that there is no common definition of what constitutes the one and the other. Allen, O’Toole, McDonnell and Harris (2011, p. 15), for example, defined festivals as a “universal form of event that pre-date the contemporary event industry and exist in most times and most societies.” Moreover, “festivals celebrate the things people value” (Chappel & Loades, 2006, p. 191). These definitions are very broad and encompass a variety of concepts. The general understanding is that festivals are a certain kind of special event and that music festivals are the most common type of festival today. Younger, Bowles and Wilson (2001, p. 733) highlighted that music festivals in modern times have become “independent cultural enterprises” and often not only present music but also other forms of art as part of their program. A particular tradition or the history of a certain place or nation can oftentimes still be found in music festivals today. The distinguishing features of a festival can be described in terms of the unique time, space and activity of the leisure experience (Lynch & Veal, 2006). Moreover, the liminal nature of the festival experience has been framed as a ‘time out of time’ (Falassi, 1987).

### *1.2.1 History, Genres and Styles*

Australian musical taste is influenced by both traditional Australian folk music and a variety of other styles, due to the large proportion of immigrants in the country (particularly from Europe and Asia). Furthermore, the rich Australian Indigenous culture, with its tradition of rituals and ceremonies, also plays an important role, as do the new media and popular music influences from other countries. These diverse global influences on musical genres, together with the commercial music industry in Australia, have shaped Australian tastes (Allen, et al., 2011; Lynch & Veal, 2006; Richards, 2007; Seal & Willis, 2003; Simpson, 2006).

Many music festivals in Australia aim to introduce the audience to new genres, styles and experiences (Steel, 2009). Every major city in Australia has a big annual festival offering a variety of performances, concerts, and shows; and these festivals aim to provide something for everyone. The festivals are government sponsored and aim to attract tourists and locals alike. An example is the Brisbane Festival. It takes place for three weeks in September every year and includes theatre performances, classical music, concerts by emerging artists, street performances and much more (Brisbane Festival, 2011). At the other end of the spectrum are the big (outdoor) music festivals, such as Splendour in the Grass, the Woodford Folk Festival, or the Bluesfest. Some of these events feature one particular style of music, while others offer a variety of genres. Furthermore, there are a lot of small-scale community festivals—many of them only one-day events—that focus on engaging the community and making music together rather than purely being entertainment. Festivals are thus a particular kind of leisure event that both reflect and create the diversity of Australian culture (Eltham, 2009; Lynch & Veal, 2006; Terracini, 2007).

An Australian Bureau of Statistics survey (2007) focused on work in selected culture and leisure activities in Australia. It lists 409,800 people involved in organising festivals, an increase of 62 per cent from 2004. The survey also found that short-term involvement is very high in the culture and leisure industry (measured as up to 13 weeks of involvement per year, or less than 10 hours per week). In particular, festival organising shows a very high percentage (81%) in short-term involvement, which is related to the nature of festivals only taking place over a short period of time, and the high number of volunteers involved. There is no current statistic on the number of festivals in Australia. The last Australian Bureau of Statistics survey (2003) listed 152 performing arts festivals of more than two days duration from 1999–2000. Interestingly, 72 of these were music festivals. A recent Australia Research Council funded project focused on regional and rural festivals in three Australian states (Tasmania, Victoria and New South Wales) and aimed to document the significance of these events for local communities and economies (Gibson, Connell, Waite, & Walmsley, 2011). More than 2,850 rural festivals were included in the study and a subsequent more detailed study was completed with 480 of those festival organisers.

The research team found a vast diversity of rural festivals with sport, community, agriculture and music ranking the highest.

### *1.2.2 Australian Arts Policy and Funding*

Arts policy is usually associated with fine arts funding. However, policies are far broader in scope regarding creativity and culture, and they have to include other forms of support for arts organisations and artists, as well as with rules and regulations (Eltham & Westbury, 2010). In Australia, the most important institution dealing with arts policy issues is the Australia Council for the Arts. It was established in 1973 under the Whitlam government and offered valuable support for the arts during this time, especially for theatre, visual arts, dance and literature. However, many claim that it has not adapted to the changes in arts and culture, and that it is trapped within old ideologies (Eltham & Westbury, 2010; Hawkins, 1991; Rowse, 1985). Steel (2009, p. 236) argued that, “the council is not concerned with individuals, only with the masses. It doesn’t want to improve the quality of people’s experience, only the numbers of people having some experience or other.”

Another point of critique is the large amount of support that the so-called ‘high arts’ still receive, whereas little attention is given to smaller arts organisations, emerging artists, community arts programs, and Indigenous Australian art and culture. State governments allocate a lot of funding into opera houses, galleries, museums, and theatres, places that are already well established. They neglect many other forms of art, especially contemporary Australian art in all its diverse forms (Eltham & Westbury, 2010; Hull, 1991). One reason, as Terracini (2007, p. 28) pointed out, is that they seem to focus too much on the production of “masterpieces.” He argued that any form of art is an ongoing creative process, and that this process—not merely the end product—should be supported.

The Australia Council for the Arts made an important step into a new direction of arts policy and arts funding with their research report on Australian participation in the

arts (Australia Council for the Arts, 2010). The report aimed to provide the basis for future policies, regulations, and strategies of including the population in the creation of art. Key factors for participation in the arts were identified in the report, such as education, income and location for instance, as well as barriers to participation. According to the report, the two main reasons for not attending and participating are “lack of time” and “lack of interest.” Other reasons included that “it costs too much,” “I’m not an artistic person,” and “there aren’t enough opportunities close to where I live” (Australia Council for the Arts, 2010, p. 21). The average attendance by individuals at live music events, such as concerts or commercial music festivals in Australia was six times per year, with pop, rock, country, and dance music as the most favoured styles according to the report.

In terms of funding, the Australia Council for the Arts as well as organisations such as Events Queensland, provide funding opportunities for music festivals and sport events with a strong tourism development focus (Events Queensland, 2011). Furthermore, the Australia Government established a program which particularly supports Australian regional and community festivals: the ‘Festivals Australia’ program (Australian Government, 2010). The program focuses on ‘new or a special sort of cultural activity’ within regular festivals. Round 31 in November 2010, for example, offered approximately \$545,000 to 37 successful applicants. The total number of applications was 100; many of them were remote or very remote community festivals, which is in line with the program’s goal to support regional and remote communities. The Queensland Music Festival received a \$38,000 grant for its *Torres Strait Islands Choral Project* as part of the 2011 festival, in addition to its other funding sources (the State Government and other partnerships, donations and grants). This particular grant helped community members from Thursday Island, Mabuyag, Darnley and Moa prepare for a performance of a new choral work by Damian Barbeler (QMF, 2011). Including the community in such projects is an important element of the current Australian festival scene. In contrast to ‘popular’ culture, commercially-oriented or ‘high’ culture music festivals, the emphasis on participation and cultural expression is largely influenced by the community arts movement and community cultural development.

### *1.2.3 Community Cultural Development*

A trend towards including communities in the creation of arts started in response to the social and political struggles during the 1960s and 1970s and emphasised including disadvantaged and culturally different groups of people, to make their voices heard through art and music, and today includes any non-traditional form of art. With this democratising movement away from ‘high culture’ and the centre of arts production, greater engagement with the periphery and the regional communities occurred. Furthermore, the central argument of community arts emphasised how all citizens, not just the ‘elite’, should have access to art and culture. These ideas and changes in the perception of the role of art in culture led to an increase in community arts and community cultural development projects (Hoffie, 1991; Hull, 1991; Kirby, 1991). The Australia Council for the Arts reports that 32 per cent of the population engaged in some sort of community arts in 2009, either creatively or receptively. In particular, those in rural areas participated more in community arts than others. The most popular art forms were visual arts and crafts, theatre, dance, creative writing and music (Australia Council for the Arts, 2010).

Community cultural development describes “a range of initiatives undertaken by artists in collaboration with other community members to express identity, concerns and aspirations through the arts (...), while building cultural capacity and contributing to social change” (Adam & Goldbard, 2001, p. 107). In community cultural development programs the focus is on the production of art, not merely the consumption of entertainment (Hawkins, 1991). Developing new skills and knowledge within the community through continuous learning and collaboration with professionals is a further principle informing these initiatives (Bartleet, Dunbar-Hall, Letts, & Schippers, 2010; Derrett, 2003; Martin, Tunny, & Carroli, 2000; Sonn, Drew, & Kasat, 2002). Arts projects need to be “owned” by a community in order to be effective and valuable and to create a collective identity among community members (Kay, 2000, p. 423).

Festival organisers engaged in community cultural development therefore identify and invest in ways of working *with* the community over a long period of time rather than merely putting on a show for them. The approach requires the development of strong relationships between the festival staff and members of the community and the creation of a professional partnership. In principle, festival staff and community members are partners in the project and need to learn to work together over a long period of time. Through collaboration between the festival staff and the community, musical pieces and performances can be co-created (Adam & Goldbard, 2001; Mulligan & Smith, 2006; Phipps & Slater, 2010).

The long-term value of community cultural development initiatives, however, is difficult to measure because the benefits are intangible or non-economic (Gibson, et al., 2011; Molloy, 2002; Phipps & Slater, 2010). Long-term value for individual participants includes the personal development of new skills, becoming interested in new topics, making new friends and sharing the rehearsal and performance experience (Adam & Goldbard, 2001; Bartleet, et al., 2010; Sonn, et al., 2002). Other effects are positive for the community as a whole, such as pride in their local identity and more positive feelings about where community members live. Networks with other institutions and communities can also be built or enhanced through partnerships and collaboration (Carey & Sutton, 2004; Hawkins, 1991; Jepson, Clarke, & Ragsdell, 2013; Kay, 2000; Lancaster, Kyte, Craik, & Schippers, 2010; Reid, 2008; Whitford & Ruhanen, 2013). Reid (2006) found that there is a strong relationship between a sense of identification and subsequent participation in the community, particularly in planning and organising rural events. The process of developing the performance together with the community and rehearsing with them is therefore an important part of creating a sense of belonging and identification with the work, as well as developing new friendships and skills.

Many music festivals in Australia offer both, concerts by professional artists and performers, as well as workshops, performances, and programs that include the community. The trend is to concentrate on “participation,” rather than the

“appreciation” (Hawkins, 1991, p. 49) commonly required for the more traditional, institutional arts, such as ballet, opera, or symphony. Community cultural development programs therefore bring people together to share and create something of common value (Bartleet, et al., 2010; Derrett, 2003; Hager, 2008). The Queensland Music Festival is a festival that includes both artistic excellence and community participation in its program. The aim of the festival is to help communities define their own identity, to tell their stories and to make their voices heard.

### ***1.3 Research Problem***

As outlined above, music festivals are an important part of the Australian leisure, tourism and cultural industries. There are many different kinds of music festivals in Australia offering different styles and genres; many of them engage the local community and offer long-term impacts and value for regional and rural areas in terms of community capacity building. Competition is high, many new festivals emerge and unsuccessful ones disappear. The management of any music festival thus needs to be effective in order for the organisation to be successful in both economic and creative terms. The notion of success is thereby “(...) as much an inward-looking concept as an outward one” (Getz & Frisby, 1988, p. 23). Through effective knowledge management festival organisations can stay innovative and competitive in the long term.

Based on this understanding, my research project aimed to explore how knowledge is practised and managed within music festival organisations in order for them to be successful and stay competitive. Knowledge management in music festivals is a creative and relational process, involving experts with different backgrounds coming together for a short period of time, who share their artistic and operational knowledge to create the festival experience. During the short period of time of the festival, however, not everything about festival practices and processes can be documented and stored, and thus made explicit. At the same time, professional festival

organisations also need to develop a long-term strategic plan; both forward planning and short-term delivery are hence vital for the success of the organisation. The current festival management literature identifies these logistical issues (see for example, Abfalter, Stadler, & Mueller, 2012; Allen, et al., 2011; Getz, 2002), yet the relational and process dimensions of knowledge management are still under researched. These often ‘tacit’ dimensions are largely influenced by the organisational culture and festival identity, which shape the understanding of knowledge management, organisational learning and the success of the festival in the long term. By taking an interpretive approach, my research aimed to understand how the festival culture shaped knowledge management practices over the course of the festival life cycle. In this sense knowledge is not simply information but rather understood as a dynamic, interpretive concept and practice within a certain festival context. The findings will help festival managers identify how knowledge management practices are embedded in an organisational culture and identity that can enhance or impede new ideas, knowledge creation and organisational learning.

#### ***1.4 Research Question and Aims***

Effectively practising knowledge management within a festival organisation is crucial for the organisation’s long-term success. In an arts organisation the strategic and operational practices of managing knowledge can be regarded as part of the creative process itself where various festival members<sup>2</sup> in teams and as individuals collaborate to produce the event experience. Furthermore, the festival life cycle shapes this process for both permanent and seasonal staff, all of whom need to have a shared understanding of the festival vision and implementation strategies in order to be able to work together as a creative knowledge community. Therefore, creating and maintaining an organisational culture that supports new ideas and innovation—a

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<sup>2</sup> In the remainder of this thesis I will refer to all permanent and seasonal staff, volunteers, board members, sponsors, artists, contractors of the QMF and members of the communities as ‘festival members’. They shared a common festival identity and can thus be regarded as ‘members of the organisation’ rather than stakeholders (Gioia, Schultz, & Corley, 2000; Hatch & Schultz, 2002). Furthermore, Dixon (1999, p. 184) suggested that, “[the] use of the term is an attempt, through language, to integrate the organization; to be inclusive.”



“knowledge culture” (McInerney, 2002, p. 1014)—is an important element of knowledge management in music festivals.

My research focused on the Queensland Music Festival as a case study of a creative community composed of paid staff, board members, volunteers, sponsors, contractors, artists and community members. The main question informing my research is:

*How does the Queensland Music Festival’s approach to knowledge management contribute to its success as a festival organisation?*

To further explore this question, the following three sub-questions also informed my research:

- What knowledge management practices does QMF utilise to implement its vision and community cultural development principles?
- How do QMF’s organisational identity and interdisciplinary team structure shape knowledge management practices?
- How can an appreciative and reflexive understanding of relational knowledge practices contribute to organisational learning within QMF?

In terms of practical implications, my research may enable festival managers and organisers to appreciate the importance of an organisational culture that supports knowledge creation and transfer practices. I aim to create awareness among festival members that everybody plays a role in knowledge management, not merely the executive director and permanent staff. If members of the creative community are encouraged and motivated to share their knowledge, this will contribute to the success of the festival in the long term.

My research makes a contribution to the field of knowledge management research by focusing on a special case, rather than already well defined knowledge management processes in large firms with mostly routine work. In festival organisations the production and co-creation of an ‘experience’ makes knowledge management even more challenging. The complex community context and relational dimension of knowledge management are key challenges, rather than issues about information management, such as storing knowledge in databases, or distributing information through checklists. My ethnographic study of knowledge management within a specific music festival organisation thus contributes to the knowledge management literature through a detailed investigation of festival members’ embodied and storied knowledge management practices and meanings. Further, my research will make a methodological contribution by applying a social constructionist approach enriched with post-structuralist ideas about power, emotion work and narrative, that are still under recognised in the field of knowledge management research (Gordon & Grant, 2005; Vince & Gabriel, 2011).

Finally, within the festival and event management body of knowledge, the main focus of knowledge management research to date has been on conceptualising knowledge as an asset, storing and documenting knowledge as part of the event evaluation process (Allen, et al., 2011). Only a few studies emphasise a practice-based approach and relational understanding of knowledge management in festivals and events (Abfalter, et al., 2012; Katzeff & Ware, 2006; Ragsdell, Espinet, & Norris, 2013). None of them develops a Foucauldian notion of the effects of power/knowledge relations (Foucault, 1980). My research will thus contribute to this body of knowledge through an approach that focuses on knowledge management as a dynamic practice and context-dependent process, co-constituted between all members of the festival.

Through applying an Appreciative Inquiry approach to both knowledge management and festival management, I emphasise and highlight the strengths of the organisation rather than applying a problem-solving approach. I identified Appreciative Inquiry as a useful way to contextualise and conceptualise my ethnographic research findings in

order to highlight what works well and what could be possible for QMF in the future based on their current strengths (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003; Whitney, Trosten-Bloom, & Rader, 2010).

### ***1.5 The Queensland Music Festival***

The Queensland Music Festival vision is:

*To transform lives through unforgettable musical experiences*

The Queensland Music Festival, originally named the Brisbane Biennial Festival of Music, was established in 1990. It is a biennial music festival, taking place in Brisbane and regional communities all over the state of Queensland. The festival includes a variety of musical styles; local, national and international artists; and at the same time, encourages participation within the communities. Most events are free and accessible to all. Furthermore, the rich diversity of musical styles in Queensland is celebrated, creating identity for remote regions within the state. A lot of the artistic projects run in the communities are long-term collaborations that tell local stories and define local culture, and aim to give back to the community (QMF, 2011).

The 2011 festival was managed by a permanent staff of seven people (artistic director, executive director, finance and operations manager, program director, technical director, development and marketing director, and development executive), which swelled to include another 35 production, administrative and marketing professionals, as well as over 2,000 international, national and community-based artists (QMF, 2011). The festival thus represents an organisational structure typical of festivals, and has to face the challenge of bringing festival members with various backgrounds and experience together for a short period of time to create something of value for the organisation as a whole. It can be said that in terms of organisational growth, QMF

has reached the stage of “professionalism” (Getz & Frisby, 1988, p. 24). The organisation is further governed by a board of directors of six members who oversee the strategic direction of the festival (QMF, 2011).

The 2011 QMF festival season was highly successful. There were 55 Brisbane events and 54 regional events, as well as several online and state-wide radio events, totalling a number of 120 events over 17 days, which marks an increase of 36 per cent over the 2009 festival. The number of regional events increased significantly from 25 events in 2009 to 54 events in 2011, in line with the vision of the festival and its community arts focus. The festival came in on budget and attracted a large audience. The total attendance of all events was roughly 115,000 people, an increase of 140 per cent from 2009. Again, particularly the regional events showed an increase in attendance (by 96%). Adding the online engagement to attendance leads to a total of over 178,000 people attending the 2011 festival, an increase of 20 per cent from 2009 (personal information, August 2011).

In terms of regional events, the project *Behind the Cane* in Bowen can be used as an example to show the success of including the community in the festival, working together with them and meeting their expectations. A survey conducted by QMF summarises some of these results: a majority of over 85 per cent in all categories strongly agreed with the statements “As a participant, the project has been a fantastic experience,” “fully met my expectations,” “showcased local talent,” “told stories about the community,” “increased community understanding of music, arts and culture” and “made me feel proud of where I live” (personal communication, August 2011). The internal evaluation suggests that the Queensland Music Festival is successfully pursuing its vision. A majority of participants also strongly agreed that they made new friends or connections with other people through participating in the project. The five most mentioned words associated with participating in the *Behind the Cane* project were “fun,” “inspired,” “excited,” “motivated” and “entertained.” In the words of one community participant, the experience can be summarised as:

Thank you, thank you, thank you a thousand times, thank you QMF. For your vision and foresight to want to learn about our ancestral stories and to want to tell it out. It is one thing to research and enquire but to be able to take all the information gathered and transpose it into song and dance, music and drama in such a way as to be able to convey to an audience OUR STORY so accurately is why I (WE) can't begin to thank you enough. (QMF survey, August 2011)

### ***1.6 Structure of the Thesis***

The remainder of the thesis is structured as follows: Chapter 2 provides an analysis of the literature on knowledge management in festivals and events particularly emphasising the lack of attention that has been given to relational knowledge management in the field. I then conceptualise my practice-based understanding of knowledge management within festival organisations using an Appreciative Inquiry approach to both festival and knowledge management, as well as organisational learning.

In Chapter 3 I describe my interpretive, reflexive methodology to the case under study and introduce the ethnographic methods of participant observation and in-depth interviews that I used in my fieldwork. I also provide details on the process of analysing my findings and address issues of validity and reliability as well as the limitations of my research. Throughout I present insights into my research journey and how my understanding about the organisation evolved over time.

Chapter 4 provides a description and analysis of the QMF identity and vision as the basis for effective knowledge management and organisational learning. I highlight practices of creating and sharing a common festival identity and community cultural development principles and how these in turn enhanced staff members' 'know how' that enabled them to contribute to QMF's vision. Furthermore, I emphasise the practice of creating formal and informal rituals for knowledge sharing, how staff

members engaged in these rituals and came to understand ‘how to’ work within QMF’s collaborative culture.

In Chapter 5 I describe the QMF internal organisational structure with a focus on appreciating interdisciplinary team collaboration. The QMF human resource management practices are introduced, including staff recruitment and development processes. I then highlight how the unique ‘pod’ structure at QMF enhanced knowledge creation and transfer practices within the team and identify and make visible several knowledge management roles as enacted by staff members. These practices in turn constituted staff members ‘know how’ that contributed to effective collaboration.

Chapter 6 examines how knowledge was practised externally with members of the communities. I describe within QMF’s community cultural development projects two embodied and storied knowledge practices that staff members engaged in: building relationships of trust and respect and co-creating performances. For each practice the ‘know how’ constituted within the practice is highlighted and I make visible how festival members performed and practised QMF’s community cultural development principles. I also demonstrate how QMF has become a learning organisation through sharing stories about these practices with all members of the organisation.

In Chapter 7 I finally summarise the findings and contributions of my research and also provide several implications for festival management policy and practice.

## **Chapter Two: Literature Review and Conceptual Approach**

### ***2.1 Introduction***

In this chapter I review the literature that informs my study and address the call for interdisciplinary research in the field of event and festival studies to embody “holistic, integrated research; (...) and the application of qualitative (...) methods” (Getz, 2007, p. 8). I start with a general introduction to the key knowledge management terms and discuss the event and festival literature with a particular emphasis on the festival management process as it informs knowledge management within festival organisations. I then introduce several case studies on knowledge management in festival and event organisations and highlight their analysis of knowledge documentation as part of event evaluation. I identify the limitations of understanding knowledge as an ‘asset’ and argue that knowledge cannot merely be stored in databases and checklists, as it is ‘relational’ and thus created and shared by all members of the organisation throughout the entire festival life cycle. I then highlight current trends and issues in knowledge management research and how they provide further ideas that have not been applied to festivals and events thus far.

Based on my identification of these gaps in both the festival as well as knowledge management literature, I conceptualise a different approach to analysis of knowledge management in festival organisations that informs my study. I explain the relational, social constructionist understanding of knowledge management within which, “(...) it becomes clear that knowledge work involves communication among loosely structured networks and communities of people, and that understanding it involves identifying the social practices and relationships that are operative in a particular context” (Thomas, Kellog, & Erickson, 2001, p. 866). Rather than merely regarding knowledge as an asset, the relational knowledge management body of research aims to identify the context in which knowledge is produced, enacted, embodied and negotiated through the exercise of power. I argue that this relational understanding of

knowledge management provides a different way of thinking about knowledge management in festival organisations that extends the existing emphasis on knowledge documentation in databases and checklists.

I go on to introduce Appreciative Inquiry as a particular approach to relational knowledge management that has not been applied to the festival context thus far and highlight its potential to identify strengths within an organisation and to build on these strengths to achieve further success. I finally emphasise the significance of storytelling, narratives and the effects of language on organisational learning within the Appreciative Inquiry approach to knowledge management practices.

## ***2.2 Knowledge Management in Festivals and Events***

Over the last few decades the belief in a knowledge-based economy has grown. Based on the seminal work of Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), it is now widely recognised that when organisations manage their knowledge efficiently they have a competitive advantage over organisations that do not succeed in doing so. A variety of knowledge management models have emerged; and these provide ideas about how to improve the identification, creation, transfer, and documentation of knowledge. These processes of managing knowledge help organisations learn over time, and build on what has or has not worked in the past. Thus the concept of knowledge management is linked to organisational learning and innovation (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Gorelick, Milton, & April, 2004; Senge, 2006). In the following section I identify trends, issues and gaps in knowledge management research in festivals and events. I start with a definition of key concepts and terms and an overview of how knowledge management has been applied in festival and event studies thus far. I then summarise knowledge management research trends during the last few decades and highlight the potential of knowledge management in festivals beyond storing knowledge in checklists, manuals and databases.



### 2.2.1 Terms and Definitions

First, one needs to clarify that knowledge is not equivalent to information. The traditional knowledge management literature commonly distinguishes between *data*, *information*, and *knowledge*. Data, on the lowest level, simply consists of numbers without any particular meaning. Information is data put into a certain context or order (Bergeron, 2003; Martensson, 2000). At the highest level, “[k]nowledge can be defined as interpreted information put into action through use in processes, procedures, documents and repositories, to add value to the resulting activity of an individual, team or organisation” (Du Plessis, 2006, p. 62-63). While the first two dimensions can be captured by a computer, knowledge always requires some sort of human interaction, interpretation or understanding. It includes insights, experiences and practical ‘know how’; and it is created and produced by individuals interacting and communicating with each other. Thus, knowledge is always relational, context- and process-specific. Organisational members, therefore, need to understand the context in which knowledge is created and shared so that every member of the organisation has a clear picture of how their knowledge fits into the whole (Bergeron, 2003; Choo, 2006; Nonaka & Konno, 1998; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

The successful management of knowledge has been defined in many different ways. One such definition describes knowledge management as “a deliberate and systemic approach to ensure the full utilization of the organization’s knowledge base, coupled with the potential of individual skills, competencies, thoughts, innovations, and ideas to create a more efficient and effective organization” (Dalkir, 2005, p. 2). It is therefore essential to understand, analyse and make use of the various kinds of knowledge within an organisation. Within the knowledge management literature there are different frameworks and models. Heisig (2009) collected 160 knowledge management frameworks from research and practice over a publication period of eight years (1995–2003). His aim was to identify similarities and differences between these frameworks. He found that they commonly distinguish between the activities of identifying, creating, sharing/transferring, using, and storing knowledge, at times

using different terminology. Some models try to explain the entire process, while others focus on specific elements of the process. The following models and frameworks, among others, have received significant attention both in theory and practice: Nonaka and Takeuchi's Knowledge Spiral Model, Choo's Sense-Making Knowledge Management Model, Wiig's Model for Building and Using Knowledge, as well as Wenger's Communities-of-Practice theory (Dalkir, 2005; Wenger, 1998).

Second, based on Polanyi's *The Tacit Dimension*, in which he argued that, "(...) we can know more than we can tell" (1966, reprinted 1983, p. 4), the knowledge management literature distinguishes between two forms of knowledge along a continuum: explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge (see for example: Argote & Ingram, 2000; Dalkir, 2005; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Nonaka & Von Krogh, 2009; Von Krogh, 2002). On the explicit end of the continuum is knowledge that can be expressed in words or numbers, and communicated easily. It includes formulae, common principles and procedures, often in a documented form. Tacit knowledge, on the other end of the continuum, is difficult to capture and share with others. It is very individual, contextual and relational as it is rooted in people's actions, experiences and beliefs.

Nonaka and Konno (1998) further distinguished between two dimensions of tacit knowledge: the more technical dimension of skills, crafts, and 'know how', and the cognitive dimension of "beliefs, ideals, values, schemata, and mental models which are deeply ingrained in us and which we often take for granted" (Nonaka & Konno, 1998, p. 42). While these forms of tacit knowledge are more valuable than explicit knowledge, in the sense that they cannot be copied by competitors, they are also difficult to share within the organisation itself because they are part of the organisational culture and taken for granted practices. Organisations, therefore, benefit from creating a culture that enhances the creation and transfer of tacit knowledge; a culture that is based on common values and beliefs, and an understanding that everyone has an important role in managing knowledge within the

organisation (Du Plessis, 2006; Suppiah & Singh Sandhu, 2011; D. Wang, Su, & Yang, 2011).

Third, knowledge management is commonly illustrated at three different levels: the individual level, the group (or team) level, and the organisational level. Particularly at the latter two levels, relationships and ways of working together are regarded as crucial. Effective knowledge management further requires the organisation as a whole to hold valuable knowledge about its history, ideals, and beliefs, so that each group and each individual has an idea of how he or she can contribute to the overall knowledge (Ardichvili, Page, & Wentling, 2003; J. S. Brown & Duguid, 1998, 2001; McLure Wasko & Faraj, 2000). Ideally, the organisation as a whole constantly improves and innovates through the knowledge contributions of its members, a process commonly referred to as ‘organisational learning’ (Argyris & Schön, 1978; Senge, 2006).

The theory of organisational learning is associated with the work of Argyris and Schön (1978) who argued that organisational learning is a continuous process, not a one-time phenomenon. They also highlighted that “there is no organizational learning without individual learning, and that individual learning is a necessary but insufficient condition for organizational learning” (p. 20). The authors distinguished between single-loop learning and double-loop learning: single-loop learning takes place when a match or mismatch is detected and corrected through a change in actions. This process works well for routines or repetitive work, on both the individual and organisational level. For more complex issues, however, double-loop learning is necessary. Through this process, mismatches are corrected by examining and altering the governing variables first, and then changing the actions (Argyris, 1992, p. 8-9). Both single- and double-loop learning require information and knowledge in order for individuals to be able to act accordingly. The learning processes then produce new knowledge and insights. Learning and knowledge are thus in a constant cycle of mutually reinforcing each other (Argote & Ingram, 2000; Argote, Ingram, Levine, & Moreland, 2000; Pervaiz, Lim, & Loh, 2002; Senge, 2006).

### *2.2.2 Events and Festival Literature*

The field of festival studies covers a vast variety of topics, which can be grouped into three main areas of interest:

- festival tourism and social/environmental/economic impacts (see for example, Getz, 2008; Gibson, et al., 2011; Gursoy, Kimb, & Uysal, 2003; Lade & Jackson, 2004; Picard & Robinson, 2006; Reid, 2008; M. Smith & Forest, 2006; Wanhill, 2006);
- motivations for attending and the festival attendees' experiences (see for example, Crompton & McKay, 1997; Cummings, 2007; Holloway, Brown, & Shipway, 2010; Morgan, 2009; Pitts, 2005); and
- the operational elements of organising, hosting and staging festivals and events (see for example, Allen, et al., 2011; Auld, Cuskelly, & Harrington, 2009; DeLisle, 2009; Hanlon & Cuskelly, 2002; Larson, 2011; Prosser & Rutledge, 2003; K. Smith & Lockstone, 2009; Tum, Norton, & Wright, 2006; Van der Wagen, 2007). Common issues within this third field of research are, for example, marketing, funding and sponsorship, the logistics of staging the festival, risk management and human resource management (and volunteer management in particular).

Knowledge management comes into play within the third field of applied research, as an important dimension of festival organising. The other two areas of research are only indirectly influenced by knowledge management practices. Therefore, in this section, I will focus mainly on the operational aspect of organising festivals: I will start with a general overview of the entire festival management process, provide case study examples of key issues, such as the human resource management and training problem in festivals and events; and finally provide some particular case studies of information and knowledge management in festivals and events.

Allen et al. (2011) provided an extensive overview of the managerial process of organising festivals and special events. An operational focus encompasses strategic considerations, marketing, financing, human resource management, logistics, legal issues, and risk management. Allen et al. (2011, p. 495) also identified the issue of knowledge management as part of the post-event evaluation. They argued that,

“[t]he staging of major events and conferences has now become so complex that event managers and organising bodies cannot afford to start from scratch in the planning of events. They must start from what has been learnt from the previous staging and history of the event and build on this (...). [T]his process of the transfer of knowledge takes place partly through the documentation of the event and partly through the skills and experience of key event personnel, who become highly sought after because of their successful track record in organising events.”

Both the explicit knowledge, which can be documented and stored in databases and checklists, as well as the tacit knowledge, that which cannot easily be shared and documented, are recognised by the authors in the planning and evaluation process; however, they do not identify any particular research in the field.

Others have aimed to summarise the entire festival management process in a more rationalised and compressed way (see for example, Malouf, 1999; O'Hara & Beard, 2006; Prosser & Rutledge, 2003). Tourism and Events Queensland (2013) provide a checklist for organising special events with a particular focus on Queensland. The checklist is an efficient tool for organising and staging any sort of event or festival within the state of Queensland; however, it only captures a general overview of the process and the major issues. It is then up to the organisers to interpret the *what* and *how* of creating knowledge on the basis of these pieces of information. These forms of documenting, and thus the focus on identifying information and conveying explicit knowledge, are essential for the smooth flow and effectiveness of any festival. What is not identified, yet equally as important, is how knowledge is practised and thus the more valuable tacit knowledge and creative element of running the festival.

While checklists are very important to event operations, many scholars investigate a certain aspect of the entire festival management process, and thus offer a more critical insight into particular organisational key issues through the use of case studies. Mules (2004), for example, described the evolution and growth of the Gold Coast's Wintersun Festival over time, and pointed out that putting the management process in the hands of one individual is both a strength and a threat: on the one hand, the festival director has established long-term relationships and informal links with other individuals and groups; on the other hand, if this person leaves the organisation, most of his/her knowledge will be lost. Mules also highlighted the importance of innovation and learning from other events and the use of a variety of committees who discuss ideas and trends with the board of directors in order for the festival to stay competitive. Getz and Andersson (2008) proposed that with growing professionalism in the events industry, event and festival organisations are becoming more and more institutionalised. They provided fifteen propositions of what makes an institutionalised festival organisation, one of which includes the idea that "learning processes are in place" (Getz & Andersson, 2008, p. 14). In her study about innovation and creativity in festival organisations, Larson (2011) further highlighted that for festival organisations to survive in the long term, they constantly need to innovate and adapt to new trends. She provided data from several case studies on internal renewal strategies and argued that the management's and team's view on renewal as well as the organisational culture are, among others, important factors for the long-term success of the organisation.

Stakeholder management in events and festivals, finally, has been identified as particularly important for the long-term success of event organisations and strategies of relationship building were proposed by Getz, Andersson and Larson (2007) and Reid (2006, 2011). With an emphasis on rural events, Reid (2011, p. 33) maintained that, "retaining existing stakeholder satisfaction is integral to sustainable event organization practice (...)." Mackellar (2006) further investigated networks and innovation at a regional festival in New South Wales, Australia, both from an economic viewpoint as well as a social perspective. She found that interaction with

different stakeholders at the festival is crucial not only in terms of product, service and marketing innovation, but also social innovation. It was argued that social capital—the “social resources individuals within a community draw upon and provide value to themselves and their organizations” (Lesser & Prusak, 2000, p. 124), such as a common identity, trust and a shared language—was created through new relationships, and at the same time existing relationships were strengthened.

The above examples illustrate some of the characteristics that influence knowledge management in music festivals. Both explicit forms of knowledge, such as checklists and manuals, as well as the tacit knowledge dimension and relationships, are crucial in running a music festival. Furthermore, human resource management in festivals plays a particularly important role when it comes to knowledge management. With increasing professionalisation in the field of event and festival management (Mair, 2009), it is argued that while a solid educational background can provide the knowledge and skills required in the industry, on-the-job training and experience are equally as important for learning and skills development (Arcodia, 2009; Juneke, Lockstone, & Mair, 2009). Some studies mention staffing, recruiting and retaining staff members as well as volunteers as being very important for festivals and events (see for example, Allen, et al., 2011; Beaven, George, & Wright, 2009; Deery, 2009; Elstad, 2003; K. Smith & Lockstone, 2009; Stadler, Fullagar, & Reid, in press; Van der Wagen, 2007).

Most of the time organisers have to rely on people’s previous experience rather than on training, simply because in festivals there is not enough time for conducting training sessions. With volunteers this is usually recognised as a particular challenge, but also with other staff members, since most of the training and learning is on-the-job (Van der Wagen, 2007). Furthermore, through contracting festival organisations have to rely on the expertise of various stakeholders and partners in dealing with certain elements of the festival. Due to the short-term, ‘pulsating’ nature of festivals, lack of skills and expertise is sometimes mentioned as one reason why festivals fail (Getz, 2002; Hanlon & Cuskelly, 2002). Therefore, quite understandably, scholars

have emphasised staff training for festival and event management, particularly with volunteers (see for example, Elstad, 2003; Hede & Rentschler, 2008; Kemp, 2002; K. Smith & Lockstone, 2009). The training and on-the-job learning of staff and volunteers hence also need to be considered as part of the process of organisational learning that underpins effective knowledge management.

In regards to particular research on information and knowledge management in festivals and events, the examples below mainly follow traditional knowledge management research in terms of storing and documenting knowledge in databases and checklists. Singh, Racherla and Hu (2007), for instance, invented a knowledge mapping tool for an online system for safe festivals and events (eSAFE). The generated knowledge maps identify key knowledge areas and help share and leverage knowledge that is important to others in the field. The tool is quite useful; however, it is limited to risk and safety management in festivals and events. Furthermore, the tool requires festival and event management professionals to contribute to the system, to type in the relevant information and insights, so that they can be shared. Many festival managers might feel reluctant to do so, or might be too busy. As has been discussed above, the issue of lack of time is festival and event specific.

Information and knowledge generation and documentation is also seen as very important in the running of mega-events such as the Olympics, but “information management *per se* is rarely recognized as a formal component of sport event management, despite the fact that the organization of sporting events include many information actions and processes” (Toohey & Halbwirth, 2005, p. 302). Chappelet (2000), for example, stressed the importance of training volunteers, and writing and distributing manuals among employees. During the Sydney Olympic Games 2000 a system—the TOK (Transfer of Know How)—was established, through which tacit knowledge could be turned into formal knowledge and manuals, so that the following Games could benefit from the lessons learned during the Sydney Games (Toohey & Halbwirth, 2005). Halbwirth and Toohey (2001) further investigated a specific knowledge project, the Sydney 2000 Games Information System, and argued that in



order for a successful knowledge project to be implemented it needs to fit the organisational environment and culture. The authors therefore acknowledged that knowledge management affects and is affected by an organisation's culture. Another Olympic Games study was conducted by Singh and Hu (2008), who dealt with knowledge exchange between the Athens Organizing Committee and the Greek National Tourism Organization during the 2004 Athens Olympic Games. They found that both institutions created a large amount of new knowledge and also shared some of it, and they highlighted the importance of transferring these kinds of knowledge to future organising committees. Although very valuable, such knowledge sharing programs require a lot of resources, and are thus difficult to implement in small or medium-sized festival organisations. Furthermore, they mainly focus on knowledge as an asset.

A particular knowledge management study in a festival has been undertaken by Katzeff and Ware (2006), who built a story-telling booth, where volunteers at a festival could enter anytime, and record their concerns, feelings, or problems. This form of capturing tacit knowledge was very valuable for the organisation in terms of organisational learning from the experience of volunteers. Problems of communication, for example, showed that there was a lack of knowledge about volunteers' expertise and 'know how', and also the absence of relevant information about certain problems. The overarching focus on knowledge management was to use the story-telling booth to capture parts of the relational and tacit knowledge and make it explicit, and to uncover problems of communication. Through the creation of personal stories, the work of volunteers and their roles were made visible and thus provided the basis for more effective volunteer management. However, the study was limited to volunteers, and did not involve other staff members. It only used the method of story-telling as a means for collecting data. The collected stories, however, might differ from actual volunteer behaviour.

In a previous study, Abfalter, myself and Müller (2012) investigated the organisation of knowledge sharing within one particular festival organisation in Colorado. We

explored how the development of a community-of-practice across the festival team involved several levels of participation and involvement with the organisation. The informal and flexible structure proved successful in terms of sharing knowledge with new and seasonal staff members within the festival organisation. We found that both formal and informal ways of sharing knowledge with newcomers in temporary festival organisations are essential for the acquisition of organisational knowledge and that, “this is particularly important during increases in staff turnover and shifts in the relation between keepers of knowledge and newcomers” (Abfalter, et al., 2012, p. 13). The study was centred on knowledge sharing activities and strategies through a focus on how a community-of-practice structure enables participation and involvement during the festival season.

Finally, Ragsdell, Espinet and Norris (2013) examined how project knowledge was acquired, stored and shared within a volunteer-led festival organisation and found that ‘learning-by-doing’ approaches were common processes enabling knowledge transfer. They also demonstrated how trust in the management of the event and in the quality of project knowledge, as well as motivation and pride in doing a good job, were among the factors positively influencing and shaping knowledge transfer behaviour among volunteers.

With the exception of these latter studies, knowledge management has thus far only marginally been applied in festivals and events with an emphasis on knowledge as an ‘asset’ that can be stored and documented. There are, however, further trends and issues identified in the current knowledge management literature that can extend the festival and events body of knowledge. I will now provide a summary of these research trends and highlight how a variety of interdisciplinary research approaches have been applied to knowledge management.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Knowledge management has also widely been applied in project-based organisations, which share similar characteristics with festival organisations in terms of their temporary nature. For a summary of knowledge management research in project-based organisations see Appendix 3.

### *2.2.3 Knowledge Management Research Trends and Issues*

Initially, the field of knowledge management research mainly focused on the technological aspect of pinning knowledge down in databases and documents (Gorelick, et al., 2004), but soon researchers and practitioners realised that they cannot exclude the relational elements of knowledge management: “Unlike first-generation KM [knowledge management], in which technology always seems to provide the answer, second-generation thinking is more inclusive of people, process, and social initiatives” (McElroy, 2003, p. 4). Following this understanding, research undertaken during the last decades follows three main dimensions: technological, organisational, and relational. I particularly distinguish between the organisational and the relational focus, whereas other scholars, such as Schütt (2003, p. 457) for example, combined “organisation and culture” as one category and highlighted “processes” as another. Some scholars also include knowledge management strategies as a fourth category (Heisig, 2009). Either way, a distinction can be made between ‘hard’ and ‘soft’ factors of knowledge management: The technological focus mainly highlights knowledge sharing and knowledge documentation issues that can be enhanced through technology, such as e-mails, databases, internal blogs or wikis, or other knowledge management systems (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Schuett, 2003). The organisational dimension includes research on formal organisational structures and designs that help facilitate knowledge management, as well as the creation of informal groups and communities-of-practice (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Szulanski, 2000; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002).

The relational focus of research, finally, emphasises the ‘soft’ factors of knowledge management, such as people, organisational culture, interaction and communication, relationships, trust, power, and motivation (Alvesson & Kaerreman, 2001; Ardichvili, et al., 2003; Blackler & McDonald, 2000; DeLong & Fahey, 2000; Huemer, von Krogh, & Roos, 1998; O’Dell, 2004; Osterloh & Frey, 2000; Yang, 2007). My research mainly falls into this third dimension of knowledge management and I will provide a more critical discussion of relational knowledge management below. It is important to note, however, that the three research dimensions are not mutually exclusive and cannot be dealt with in isolation. For example, communication is

regarded as part of the relational research focus, but at the same time needs to comply with new technology, as well as organisational structures. Successful knowledge management organisations thus manage to deal with all three elements at the same time (Heisig, 2009; McElroy, 2003; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Wenger, 1998).

Understanding knowledge as practised and created through human relationships can provide a more critical approach to the issue under study. Furthermore, problem-solving approaches dominate both the fields of festival and knowledge management research. Equally important, however, is the identification of an organisation's strengths and an emphasis on future opportunities. Hence, I will outline below an Appreciative Inquiry approach to relational knowledge management within festival organisations.

### ***2.3 Conceptualising a Different Approach to Knowledge Management within Festival Organisations***

Rather than merely focusing on knowledge documentation as part of the post-festival evaluation, I explore knowledge management in festival organisations as a complex ongoing process throughout all stages of the festival life cycle. A relational approach to knowledge management is therefore better suited to achieving effective knowledge creation and transfer among all members of the festival. Knowledge needs to be shared continuously and effectively despite the fact that individual staff members leave once the festival is over. Staff members can then reflect together and individually on what worked and what did not work and how processes and practices can be improved in the future. The organisation as a whole thus becomes a 'learning organisation'. Within the knowledge management literature, Schultze and Stabell (2004) argued that new insights of social constructionist and post-structuralist theories are rarely used to explore knowledge and knowledge management. Alvesson and Kaerremann (2001, p. 1015) further argued that, "[u]nderstanding knowledge, not as objective facts and causal explanations, but as a situated, community-based set of

meanings, may bring the epistemological outlook in knowledge management more up-to-date.” These concerns addressed by several scholars (also see, Kalling & Styhre, 2003; Kane, Ragsdell, & Oppenheim, 2005; Magalhaes, 1998; McInerney, 2002; Orlikowski, 2002; Wiig, 2000) have led to an increase in relational knowledge management research including social constructionist and post-structuralist based understandings of knowledge over the last decade. Below I will outline how this approach to knowledge management research is different from more traditional understandings and how it can be applied to festival and event studies through the lens of Appreciative Inquiry.

### *2.3.1 Relational Knowledge Management Practices*

A social constructionist understanding of knowledge and knowledge management highlights the relational dimension, meaning-making processes and knowledge practices within an organisation (Burr, 2003; Wenger, 2008). Knowledge is interpreted and changes all the time within different contexts. Burr (2003, p. 9) argued that, “[k]nowledge is therefore seen not as something that a person has or doesn’t have, but as something that people do together.” Knowledge itself is thereby regarded not as a resource or asset, but rather as a process; ‘knowing’ then is constituted in acting and practice and it therefore is embodied (Küpers, 2005). Knowledge creation and transfer practices always take place within social communities; the processes cannot be understood outside of social relationships. Relational knowledge management hence rests on the notion that knowledge resides in, and is produced through practices that are constituted and reconstituted by actors engaging with each other. Human action and relationships are crucial in constituting these collective knowledge practices within organisations (Boreham & Morgan, 2008; Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Hecker, 2012; Küpers, 2005; Orlikowski, 2002). Furthermore, the vision, culture and identity of an organisation shape these relationships and actions and therefore need to be regarded as important in constituting knowledge practices (Chen & Huang, 2007; Du Plessis, 2006; Jo & Joo, 2011; Kelly, 2000; Suppiah & Singh Sandhu, 2011; D. Wang, et al., 2011).

Practice-based knowledge management theory is partly based on studies of community-of-practice (CoP) (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Wenger, et al., 2002), where the practical ‘know how’ of work is regarded as vital to the success of a group or organisation, as well as the idea of ‘know how’ as shared within a collective of identities. The CoP concept has however been criticised in recent years (Corradi, Gherardi, & Verzelloni, 2010) leading to a shift from merely regarding CoPs as the context within which learning and knowledge transfer take place, to an emphasis on social relations constituted in action and practice. This shift has shaped the development of practice-based studies of knowledge management. As summarised by Corradi et al. (2010), the practice-based perspective on knowledge management acknowledges both the historical and structural context in which actions take place. It combines knowledge management theory with activity-theory, actor-network theory and situated learning theory. ‘Knowing in practice’ as defined by Gherardi (2000) and Orlikowski (2002) hence highlights the ‘knowing’ or ‘know how’ as constituted in action and practised in relationships. ‘Know how’—as opposed to ‘know what’—thereby emphasises the implicit and tacit knowledge base and the particular ‘ways of doing things’ within an organisation (Clegg & Ray, 2003; Cook & Brown, 1999; Kellogg, Orlikowski, & Yates, 2006; Orlikowski, 2002).

Highlighting human action and relationships as part of knowledge practices, Orlikowski (2002, p. 252) argued that,

“[k]nowledgeability or knowing-in-practice is continually enacted through people’s everyday activity; it does not exist “out there” (incorporated in external objects, routines, or systems) or “in here” (inscribed in human brains, bodies, or communities). Rather, knowing is an ongoing social accomplishment, constituted and reconstituted in everyday practice.”

Furthermore, “knowing is embedded and entangled in social practices, interactions, and is therefore distributed and disperse” (Küpers, 2005, p. 118). Knowledge practices within complex organisations therefore need to be made explicit in order for individuals and teams to be able to reflect upon themselves as well as on their practices, and for the organisation as a whole to learn over time. Skilful and

knowledgeable individuals are further able to share practices with each other and to change practices over time or in different contexts which in turn creates new knowledge for teams and the organisation (Bosch-Sijtsema, Fruchter, Vartiainen, & Ruohomaeki, 2011; Hecker, 2012; Michailova & Sidorova, 2011).

Rather than aiming to define, pin down and make explicit 'knowledge' itself, the relational dimension of knowledge management highlights the context in which knowledge and knowledge practices are produced, enacted, embodied and shared (Blackler, 1995; J. S. Brown & Duguid, 2001; Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Orlikowski, 2002; Raza, Kausar, & Paul, 2007; Yahya & Goh, 2002). The organisational culture, structure and interpersonal team characteristics are thereby regarded as important environmental factors that enhance or impede knowledge management, as well as the organisation's capacity to build a shared context or shared understanding among all members (Chen & Huang, 2007; Depres & Chauvel, 2000; Fahey & Prusak, 1998; S. Wang & Noe, 2010). The organisational culture further constitutes how an organisation's identity is practised and performed (Nag, Corley, & Gioia, 2007). The management and organisation literature typically describes the identity of an organisation in terms of its members' shared understanding of the central features distinguishing the organisation from other organisations (Albert & Whetten, 2004; Gioia, et al., 2000).

From a social constructionist perspective, organisational identity is created through organisational members' shared understanding of 'who we are as an organisation' and their shared beliefs, values and culture. Furthermore, an organisational identity is relationally constructed through interaction between organisational members as well as everyday stories, rituals, vision statements and other documents (Ashforth, Harrison, & Corley, 2008; Gioia, et al., 2000; Hatch & Schultz, 2002; Nag, et al., 2007). Organisational identity is significant in shaping commitment, loyalty, a sense of belonging, as well as person-organisation fit. A shared understanding among all organisational members of what the organisation aims to achieve is moreover the basis for effectively practising knowledge creation and transfer (Alavi & Leidner,

2001; Alvesson & Kaerreman, 2001; Hecker, 2012; Junnarkar, 2000). Positive outcomes of a shared organisation identity in turn can include cooperation, collaboration, commitment and intrinsic motivation among others (Ashforth, et al., 2008). These outcomes enhance the willingness to share information and knowledge with others in the organisation (Jo & Joo, 2011; Morrison, 1994; Sveiby & Simons, 2002). Most importantly, however, it is practice that “(...) acts as a linchpin connecting organizational identity and knowledge” (Nag, et al., 2007, p. 822). Both knowledge practices and organisational identity are dynamic and oftentimes tacit concepts, changing within different contexts and over time and space (Gioia, et al., 2000; Nag, et al., 2007).

In regards to festival management, therefore, a relational understanding of knowledge management practices emphasises the organisational identity, vision, culture and ways of working. Festival members are working subjects who reflexively aim to build their self-identities (Giddens, 1991) within this organisational context and hence enact and embody various knowledge practices shaped by the context and their reflexive selves. By taking a practice-based approach to research (Carlile, 2002), I aimed to pay attention to what QMF members did, how they made sense of their work and how they participated in co-creating the festival experience. Making explicit the organisational identity and culture in which knowledge operates is crucial in order to understand how people work together, how they collaborate, create meaning and thus create and share knowledge.

Within a relational understanding of knowledge management, power/knowledge relations also need to be considered. The knowledge management literature commonly regards the use of power (as well as knowledge) as a zero sum game or thing-like asset that someone possesses ‘over’ someone else. The structural notion of ‘knowledge is power’ dominates the field, particularly in regards to hierarchical structures, power based on authority and issues of knowledge hoarding (see for example, A. K. Brooks, 1994; Dixon, 1999; Du Plessis, 2006; Liebowitz, 2008; Pervaiz, et al., 2002; Willett, 2000; Yang, 2007). However, Foucault (1980)



maintained that power can be understood as exercised through complex sets of relationships and via language. Therefore, “[a]ll organizations are relations of power—even the most egalitarian” (A. D. Brown, Kornberger, Clegg, & Carter, 2010, p. 525). According to Foucault (1977, 1980, 1982), there is no power relation without knowledge, that is, power relations ‘produce’ knowledge through everyday interactions and language that generates meaning. It is through language then, that knowledge and cultural values which are often taken for granted can be transmitted (Belsey, 2002).

In an organisational context it is therefore important to consider the practices and language used by different actors to understand the organisation and the power relations produced through this knowledge (McKinlay, Carter, & Pezet, 2012). Snowden (2002, p. 1) argued that in this ‘third generation’ of knowledge management, stories and narratives are regarded as valuable ways of sharing knowledge, as people always “say more than they can write down” (such as in documents, checklists or reports). Wiig (2004, p. 66) further maintained that, “[m]ost people remember concepts and “stories” easier than they remember “facts”.” Furthermore an emphasis on stories and narratives helps researchers understand meaning-making processes and the context in which knowledge operates. Story-telling is also a vital element of the Appreciative Inquiry approach to (knowledge) management, as I will outline below.

Knowledge constitutes power relations; it creates a space for exercising power. Foucault argued, however, that power is not simply negative, repressing or a form of control; it can be positive. Power is productive, it produces knowledge and discourse, yet at the same time power governs what can be said in a specific context, who is allowed to speak when and where (C. Barker & Galasinski, 2001). Some knowledge management scholars have started to apply these insights about power/knowledge relations. Within an organisational context, Clegg (1998) for example, maintained that even in an open organisational culture where new meanings and knowledge are created, disciplinary power is constantly practised and practising power becomes “a

case of listening acutely, to hear silences and ellipses, as well as what is evident” (Clegg, 1998, p. 45). Clegg and Ray (2003, p. 23) further analysed the Japanese and Anglo-Saxon knowledge management literature and found that knowledge management is “limited by the separation of knowledge from power and information from meaning.” With the exception of Clarke and Jepson’s (2011) study on power and hegemony within a community festival and my recent publication on power and the co-creation of knowledge in a community cultural development project based on the present thesis (Stadler, 2013), the Foucauldian concept of power/knowledge has not yet been applied to festival management.

Power relations within organisations also significantly shape the emotion work that festival staff members engage in to create memorable experiences. Emotion work is “the act of trying to change in degree or quality an emotion or feeling” (Hochschild, 1979, p. 561) and hence constitutes an embodied practice. It is understood as a part of emotional labour and as a process involving both public as well as private emotions (Boyle, 2005). Within different organisational cultures, however, certain forms of emotional expression are acceptable whereas others need to be hidden or suppressed. The context and cultural norms and values regulate the way employees engage in emotion work and thus emotion work constitutes and is constituted through power relations (Alvesson, 1996; Fullagar, 2008; Harding, 2009; Lupton, 1998; Vince, 2001). Williams (2009, p. 150) argued that, “[w]ithout emotions, social life, including our decision-making capacities and our ability to make informed choices amongst a plurality of options, would be impossible.” Emotions such as anxiety, distress or fear, for example, may limit employees’ interest in seeking information and co-creating knowledge. Emotions such as shame, guilt or sadness build a negative context for learning (Choo, 2006).

Relational knowledge management is therefore partly shaped by power relations within the organisation and by the emotion work employees engage in. Knowing ‘how to’ conduct oneself, ‘how to’ work with others and ‘how to’ manage one’s emotions within a certain organisational culture often becomes taken for granted and

thus constitutes a tacit knowledge practice. Furthermore, in festival organisations, due to the stressful work environment, emotion work is particularly challenging, yet necessary for the success of the event and staff members' emotional well-being (Deery, 2009; Odio, Walker, & Kim, 2013). While I did not begin with a focus on emotion work when I started my research, my findings revealed that it was a crucial element of relational knowledge management and deepened my analysis of particular knowledge practices.

Research in relational knowledge management has thus far only marginally included critical questions of power, power/knowledge relations and emotions (Gordon & Grant, 2005; Vince & Gabriel, 2011). Critical post-structuralist insights on knowledge, however, can extend the social constructionist view of knowledge management in the field of festivals and events where relationships, power relations and emotions are ever-changing throughout the festival life cycle. In particular, the ever-changing nature of festivals as a leisure experience and 'time out of time' (Falassi, 1987) offers a more fluid context for analysing knowledge management.

### *2.3.2 Appreciative Inquiry Approach*

The literature on relational knowledge management as outlined above has mainly emphasised problem-solving approaches to knowledge transfer between teams or organisational units, the 'stickiness' of tacit knowledge or lack of collaboration. In contrast, an Appreciative Inquiry approach identifies an organisation's strengths in regards to knowledge management, as well as knowledge creation and transfer practices that are already working well, and aims to utilise these strengths to further enhance the organisation's success (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Similarly, festival research has traditionally emphasised problem-solving approaches for festival organisations, such as how to deal with and overcome the issues of high staff turnover, the pulsating nature of festivals, the inexperience of volunteers as well as issues relating to stress and time pressure (Getz, 2002; Elstad, 2003; Van der Wagen, 2007; Emery & Radu, 2008; Hanlon & Jago, 2009; Tesone, Ross, & Upchurch, 2010; Odio, et al., 2013). An Appreciative Inquiry approach to festival management offers

to generate new insights by highlighting what works well in the organisation, what the specific festival organisation's and staff members' strengths are and how the organisation can learn from and further build on these strengths. I have therefore drawn on insights from the Appreciative Inquiry approach, but have not used it as an action research methodology. Rather, through my ethnographic research I identified Appreciative Inquiry as a useful way to contextualise and conceptualise my findings. I will discuss in Chapter 3 how my research approach changed over time as my findings revealed much about strengths underpinning the success of QMF.

Appreciative Inquiry was first developed by doctoral student David Cooperrider and his advisor Suresh Srivastva (Cooperrider, Barrett, & Srivastva, 1995; Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987; Van Tiem & Rosenzweig, 2006; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Cooperrider collected data on organisational behaviour highlighting both the strengths and weaknesses of his case study organisation. He was particularly fascinated by the strengths and positive stories he identified and therefore only emphasised this perspective in his work. From his initial findings, Cooperrider then developed the principles of Appreciative Inquiry based upon social constructionist underpinnings (summarised from Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999):

- The organisation needs to be understood as a living, human construction where relationships are the locus of knowledge, and the world is made sense of through the power of language (the constructionist principle);
- Inquiry and change occur at the same time (the simultaneity principle);
- The organisation's story is co-authored by all its members; stories are sources for learning and interpretation (the poetic principle);
- By creating positive images of the future, current behaviours and actions are positive too (the anticipatory principle); and
- Positive questions and stories provide momentum for change (the positive principle).

Appreciative Inquiry is “a collaborative and highly participative approach to inquiry” (Yoder, 2004, p. 45). The Appreciative Inquiry approach builds on the best successes of an organisation within its current culture and core values (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Van Tiem & Rosenzweig, 2006; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Rather than emphasising problem-solving, Appreciative Inquiry aims to affirm and make explicit what is already working in the organisation, appreciate what ‘is’ and at the same time envision what ‘could be’ possible in the future (Rogers & Fraser, 2003; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). This is not to say that problems are ignored; however, Appreciative Inquiry reframes problems into opportunities for learning by focusing on the organisation’s strengths and achievements (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Conflicts and problems may still arise throughout the Appreciative Inquiry process, but rather than analysing and aiming to solve them, they are turned into opportunities for collaboration and reflexive thinking (Van der Haar & Hosking, 2004; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Hence, Appreciative Inquiry can involve the productive use of power to generate new insights into knowledge management with the context of organisational relationships and culture. Focusing on positive experiences and opportunities is regarded as important because “people experiencing positive feelings are more flexible, creative, integrative, open to information and efficient in their thinking” (Bushe, 2007, p. 32), qualities that are particularly important in festival and event management.

Appreciative Inquiry is not only a useful approach for entire organisations, but also at the group level or even for individuals. It aims to discover what “enables a particular group to work at its best” (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007, p. 44). Through discussing and sharing best practices and positive experiences, team members not only learn about each other’s competencies and skills but also create a shared image of the team which is grounded in actual practices (Pelle III, 2006). The process of Appreciative Inquiry therefore values relationships and provides a means for people to work together constructively and positively (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). Organisations are best able to operate if there is a relational process of inquiry between all members of the organisation that emphasises appreciation and affirmation. Inquiry in turn helps individuals, groups and organisations to learn and be

innovative (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). In terms of professionalisation in the festival industry it is therefore important for organisations to make visible the positive experiences of ways of working together in order to be able to build on them. Rogers and Fraser (2003, p. 80) argued that, “Appreciative Inquiry is particularly valuable in programs that are highly complex, where the technique can serve to restate and reframe what is valuable, useful, and important.” The QMF community cultural development programs, for example, are highly complex and difficult to manage over a long period of time. Emphasising and re-emphasising the community cultural development ethos and the importance of what QMF is trying to achieve through sharing positive experiences of working with members of the communities can therefore enhance these shared practices.

Appreciative Inquiry is usually used in management practice as a step-by-step process to identify ‘what is’, ‘what might be’, ‘what could be’ and finally ‘what will be’ (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). However, the process is also improvisational; it is different for every organisation or community and evolves and continuously changes based on what is important to members of the organisation (Finegold, Holland, & Lingham, 2002; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). The approach has been widely applied in a range of different organisational settings as well as in tourism and hospitality research (Koster & Lemelin, 2009; Maier, 2008; Raymond & Hall, 2008) and community development (Finegold, et al., 2002; Morsillo & Fisher, 2007). However, it has not been used in festival and event management research thus far.

In terms of knowledge management, Appreciative Inquiry uses a prospective rather than retrospective approach: it asks the question ‘what makes people share knowledge?’ and it regards knowledge management as an opportunity to be embraced and aspired to. With a focus on what is important within the organisation, the prospective approach therefore is proactive and aims for best practices in the future. The prospective Appreciative Inquiry approach is further supported by open dialogue and communication around processes and knowledge practices that are important within the organisation (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Dialogue is particularly

important in the process as the “[r]elational basis of knowledge argues that all understanding is dialogical” (Cooperrider, et al., 1995, p. 180). Through dialogue and communication, a shared vision of the future can be co-created between as many employees and stakeholders as possible—preferably all of them (Bushe, 2007; Rogers & Fraser, 2003; Van Tiem & Rosenzweig, 2006). In festival organisations it is important to not only include permanent staff, but also seasonal staff, volunteers, contractors, artists, community members and board members in these conversations in order to ensure that all festival members share a common identity and understanding.

The key to what Tchatkenery and Chowdhry (2007, p. 50) called “Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge” is the culture and climate of an organisation. They argued that, “Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge usually exists in some form in many organisations, even though it is not known as such” (p. 154). The aim is to make visible what works well in terms of knowledge sharing, so that the organisation can build upon these practices in the future. The identity and culture of the organisation therein form an important basis for knowledge to be transferred effectively. Furthermore, Appreciative Inquiry acknowledges that people create knowledge in relation to one another, through conversation, communication and social interaction (Finegold, et al., 2002). By bringing employees from all different levels and departments together in the process, they are able to learn from and with each other (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Through bringing together multiple voices, hierarchies can be broken down and power relations negotiated more transparently. In turn, multiple local knowledges and knowledge practices may emerge and co-exist (Van der Haar & Hosking, 2004).

Knowledge management and knowledge sharing in the Appreciative Inquiry literature is regarded as a ‘storied’ practice; story-telling and language are therefore important dimensions of the Appreciative Inquiry process in regards to knowledge sharing. Through story-telling tacit knowledge can be exchanged (Gorelick, et al., 2004; Küpers, 2005; Snowden, 2000; Thatchkenery & Chowdhry, 2007) and the organisation’s collective knowledge can be increased (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom,

2003). In initial interviews, and also throughout the entire process of Appreciative Inquiry, positive stories are shared about what works well in the organisation, what people value and what they hope for in terms of the organisation's future (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). Furthermore, in stories the story-teller elaborates on what is already working well and the positive emotions that are evoked (Yoder, 2004); she therefore provides and shares ideas of what else could work well in the organisation (Van Tiem & Rosenzweig, 2006). For example, "(...) when we want more collaboration across boundaries, stories of successful collaborations are likely to get us there" (Finegold, et al., 2002, p. 244).

A story is thereby defined as "an oral or written performance involving two or more people interpreting past or anticipated experience" (Boje, 1995, p. 1000), and does not necessarily require a formal beginning, middle and end as other definitions suggest. The same stories—regarded as "anecdotes of experience" (Orr, 1996, p. 125)—can be told differently in different situation, sometimes with more details and context than at other times. Within a shared culture and community of professionals, certain elements of the story do not need to be repeated every time in order to construct an actual 'story' with an introduction, point to be made and lesson learned. Members of the team are usually able to fill in these contextual pieces themselves. For outsiders, however, the stories may at times seem cryptic without the required context (Orr, 1996). At the same time, Küpers (2005, p. 121) maintained that "(...) as a story is told and retold, it changes, and so the knowledge embodied in it is constantly being developed and built on." Organisations benefit from creating opportunities for sharing stories as well as embedding story-telling in organisational processes, so that sharing their stories with each other becomes an ongoing practice for all employees (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Stories are further a means of exercising power, such as when different stories create multiple or even conflicting realities about the same event and can be interpreted in many different ways (Boje, 1991, 1995).



The aim of sharing stories is to identify tacit forms of knowledge and key values that enable knowledge creation and transfer practices within the organisation, such as for example, teamwork, participation, collaboration, empowerment, trust or sense of community (Bergeron, 2003; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). These key values are the backbone of effective knowledge management practices. Once they are identified, the organisation infrastructure can then be explored which facilitates the emergence and continuance of these values. Common elements of organisational structures and culture that support knowledge management in organisations are decision making, organisational practices and routines, incentives for sharing knowledge, leadership and open communication, but are not limited to these (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). For example, participatory or consensus-based decision making in an organisation can foster collaboration which in turn leads to knowledge sharing.

Stories can be disseminated and shared in a lot of ways. For example, they can be printed in the organisation's newsletter, quoted in marketing or recruiting materials, displayed on posters, whiteboards or websites, or told and retold over lunch and coffee (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Once they are shared, employees then engage in meaning-making. Meaning-making is an ongoing process taking place over time and focusing on experiences and narratives within their cultural context (Cooperrider, et al., 1995). It can lead to deeper levels of dialogue and organisational learning in the long term (Sinclair, 2005; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). The social constructionist understanding of stories and narratives thus emphasises they are constructed in ways that produce meaning (Renzl, 2007). Further enriching this understanding using post-structuralist notions of language, however, provides a more critical view of meaning as produced discursively as a social action that is both constructed and constructive (Alvesson & Skoeldberg, 2000; A. D. Brown, et al., 2010; Gergen, 2001). The same event or phenomenon can be described and recounted in many different ways and different stories. Language therein, "constructs the individual's subjectivity in ways that are historically and locally specific" (Richardson, 2000, p. 8). Burr (2003, p. 54-55) further highlighted that, "(...) with the poststructuralist view of language we are drawn into a view of talk, writing and social encounters as sites of struggle and conflict, where power relations are acted out and

contested.” An emphasis on stories and narrative within the Appreciative Inquiry approach to knowledge management thus allowed me to identify not only meaning-making processes and the context within which knowledge is shared, but also relations of power within the festival organisation. These power relations shape knowledge practices that have positive and negative effects on QMF becoming a ‘learning organisation’.

Organisational learning as described in the previous section, is an important goal for every organisation (Senge, 2006). Within the particular case of festival organisations and moreover a festival organisation with a strong community cultural development focus, organisational learning is crucial for its long-term success. Dixon (1999, p. 7) highlighted that organisational learning is, “the construction and reconstruction of meaning and as such it is a dynamic process.” In terms of relational knowledge management, therefore, it is important to make explicit and share certain practices of accepted ways of behaving and working together (Boreham & Morgan, 2008). Practising organisational learning from what works well within the organisation needs to be ongoing, despite the fact that individual staff members join and leave the organisation at different points in time. Stories need to be shared within and across the teams and together reflected upon in order for the organisation as a whole to be able to learn. Anderson et al. (2008, p. 52) maintained that in an Appreciative Organisation reflection is “(...) a learning step; it is important to gauge the ways in which a shared vision has been fulfilled. However, it is also here that seeds are planted for the new stories or narratives that will give energy to future group discussions.” Organisational learning is therefore important in terms of reflection on practices as well as managing for the future. However, learning at the organisational level only occurs if all staff members feel comfortable participating in the relational practice of sharing stories and narratives of success (and failure), which in turn is shaped by a collaborative organisational culture (Boreham & Morgan, 2008). Through collaboration and inquiry, one can move from reflection on an individual level to reflection as a collaborative process which in turn provides opportunities for organisational learning (Loughran, 2010).

## *2.4 Summary*

After a review of the current festival and event as well as knowledge management literature at the beginning of this chapter, I have introduced my interdisciplinary approach to the present case study. I have argued that a relational and practice-based understanding of knowledge and knowledge management has not been applied to festival and event research thus far and yet offers a more detailed analysis of the complex, context-specific nature of knowledge management throughout the entire festival life cycle. Within this study, an Appreciative Inquiry approach to both festival and knowledge management highlights the strengths and core values of the festival organisation that underpin relational knowledge management practices, rather than emphasising problem-solving approaches. In the long term, identifying what works well in an organisation contributes to organisational learning and using those strengths in the future.

I further argued that my research calls attention to the construction of meaning within festival organisations and how power relations and emotion work shape knowledge practices. An emphasis is placed upon story-telling as a way of creating a shared meaning and embodied knowledge among festival members as self-reflexive subjects. By using post-structuralist ideas of narrative and language, I intend to identify the context and meaning-making processes that constitute and are constituted by power/knowledge relations. I therefore aim to extend the literature by contributing new insights bringing together conceptual approaches with my empirical observations.

## Chapter Three: Methodology

### *3.1 Introduction*

A common concern in both festival management and knowledge management research relates to the lack of attention that is given to qualitative and interpretivist methods (Cummings, 2007; Holloway, et al., 2010; Magalhaes, 1998). Kalling and Styhre (2003, p. 161) pursued the argument that,

“(…) knowledge sharing will always take place within social communities and can never be fully understood outside of such social relationships. This implies that the field of knowledge management would benefit from more detailed empirical studies wherein the context-dependent aspects of knowledge sharing are emphasized.”

Holloway, Brown and Shipway (2010) and Fullagar and Pavlidis (2012) have argued that ethnographic methods in festival and event research are also still underutilised. Quantitative research remains dominant in the field; a small number of qualitative studies focus primarily on the event/festival experience (Cummings, 2007; Duffy, Waitt, Gorman-Murray, & Gibson, 2011) rather than on the organisation behind it.

I have responded to this call in knowledge management and festival management research by applying a reflexive methodology that involves a case study approach and ethnographic methods. Reflexivity means looking at one's own assumptions about knowledge management and being self-critical as interpreter and author. It means critically thinking and reflecting on the context and conditions that shape what one is doing, and acknowledging that the researcher's own background and beliefs are part of this reflection (Alvesson & Skoeldberg, 2000; Creswell, 2013; Snape & Spencer, 2003). It also means reflecting on the relationship between researcher and participant and recognising that this research about knowledge management in music festivals is

co-constituted with the Queensland Music Festival (Davies, 2008; Finlay, 2002; Holland, 1999; Mahadevan, 2011).

My research was guided by a reflexive methodology in the design, data collection, analysis and writing stages. According to Fullagar and Wilson (2012, p. 2, emphasis in original), reflexivity “(...) in a critical *and creative* sense may offer a way of thinking across boundaries, margins and beyond polarised positions.” I interpreted and re-interpreted my own insights and experiences as well as aimed to make multiple ‘voices’ heard about the perceptions of knowledge management within QMF. Alvesson and Skoeldberg (2000, p. 187) emphasised that, “[i]t is important to consider not only or mainly the dominant, but also and especially the marginal. (...) The ideal of pluralism may mean that the phenomenon is looked at from various angles.” Dealing with multiple perceptions of knowledge management within QMF thus gave a more detailed account of the issue under study. Furthermore, by contrasting different or even contradicting perspectives, it was possible to see multiple realities without claiming that one of them is the only ‘truth’ (Burr, 2003; Saukko, 2003). My research aimed to explore how organisational members constructed meaning about knowledge management within QMF from their different positions within the organisation. I aimed to identify and analyse similarities and differences in perspectives, making not only the ‘voice’ of the core team heard, but also festival members in various positions and with different backgrounds and levels of involvement. This was also an essential part of exploring knowledge practices and the negotiation of power relations within the festival; as well as making visible the tacit knowledge that contributes to effective relational knowledge management within festival organisations.

From a post-structuralist perspective, knowledge is not a ‘thing’ that can be defined once and for all and it “does not operate in a void” (S. Hall, 1997a, p. 49). Rather, how knowledge is put to work within a certain festival culture and context needs to be considered. A connection between power and knowledge therefore also is implied: “It is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for

knowledge not to engender power” (Foucault, 1980, p. 52). Furthermore, I believe that there is no one ‘reality’ or single ‘truth’ of knowledge management perceptions, but rather an interpretation of multiple experiences and meanings combined with my own insights and reflections. Not only is “all ‘meaning’, all ‘knowledge’ (...) a personal, individual interpretation of life experience” (Swanwick, 1994, p. 176), but it also is embedded in a social system. Therefore, my interpretation of these different views is not the only ‘true’ interpretation and definitive account either; rather it is one possible production of meaning based on the available information, context and my engagement with the festival organisation at a particular point in time (Alvesson & Skoeldberg, 2000; Benton & Craib, 2001; Guba & Lincoln, 2005; McKee, 2003; Richardson, 2000; Seale, 1999; Snape & Spencer, 2003).

In this chapter I explain the case study research method I employed with QMF. Then I describe my ethnographic methods of data collection and provide an overview of how the research was undertaken. After a description of the process of analysis, I then turn to questions of reliability and validity, as well as the limitations of my research. I also provide several examples of key events and research experiences throughout the chapter that shaped my own knowledge during the field work. It is a retrospective account of some of my key experiences and decisions I made along the way. Coffey (1999) argued that this sort of personal account is a common way of describing how the research developed, how the relationships with participants evolved and what was challenging and rewarding. Describing this research process and the researcher’s methods for learning about the setting/organisation forms a crucial part of ethnographic writing (Creswell, 2013).

### ***3.2 The Queensland Music Festival as a Case Study***

Dul and Hak (2008, p. 4) defined a case study as “a study in which (a) one case (single case study) or a small number of cases (comparative case study) in their real life context are selected, and (b) scores obtained from these cases are analysed in a

qualitative manner.” The case study research approach thus provides an in-depth investigation of a contemporary phenomenon and focuses on its real-life context. Furthermore, multiple sources of evidence are used to build a detailed understanding and description of the case under study. The researcher aims to gather rich data and see the case from the perspective of those involved (Charmaz, 2006; Eisenhardt, 1989; Gillham, 2000; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009). Case study research is also characterised by a constant back-and-forth between theory and practice. The researcher spends a long period of time in the field and is able to change her research design based on new information, discovery and reflection, if necessary. Maintaining a “chain of evidence” (Yin, 2009, p. 123) is an important part of case study research as it helps trace these steps. In my research I not only wrote field notes but also kept a research diary as a chain of evidence which helped track changes in meaning throughout the festival life cycle, to help identify the different angles and perspectives on knowledge management.

In choosing a case, the researcher needs to decide whether she wants to focus on a single case or multiple cases. However, a single case can still employ multiple units of analysis. The single case study is commonly used if the case is representative or typical, but also if it is an extreme case or a critical case (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2009). QMF served as a single case with multiple units of analysis for my research. It can be firstly seen as an extreme case in terms of knowledge management because the festival is not bound to one specific location, but rather spreads over the entire state of Queensland. The operational and creative knowledge is therefore dispersed, which makes knowledge management very difficult for the organisation. Secondly, QMF takes place biennially, and this also influences knowledge management practices over time. On the one hand, there is more time to create new knowledge along the way. On the other hand, issues of losing organisational memory must also be considered. Thirdly, knowledge management is highly influenced by the culture of an organisation. It is therefore important for the researcher to spend enough time with the organisation and to become immersed in the field in order to be able to give a detailed description of the organisational culture, values and norms. In this regard, a comparison with other festivals (multiple cases) would have been difficult to achieve.

Furthermore, within this single case I focused on particular community projects as multiple units of analysis. I included in my sample different members and groups/subgroups within the festival organisation, as well as different events and organisational moments and different points in time.

The time line below provides a summary of my case study field research process and some key events along the way. By no means does it give a full list of all events, but rather an overview of key experiences and how they influenced my research process. It is mainly based on my research diary in which I collected only the key moments and changes in my research approach or focus, whereas in the field notes I wrote up more detailed accounts and descriptions of what was happening.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Key Events</b>
January 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ethics approval</li> <li>• Signed agreement with QMF</li> </ul>
February 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entering the field</li> <li>• Participant observation at staff meetings</li> </ul>
March 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant observation at staff meetings and other events</li> <li>• First small jobs at the festival office</li> <li>• Rethinking title and research questions</li> <li>• Start receiving QMF staff e-mails</li> </ul>
April 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant observation at staff meetings and other events</li> <li>• Small jobs at the festival office</li> <li>• Plans for participating in the <i>Behind the Cane</i> and <i>Drag Queen'sLand</i> projects</li> </ul>
May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant observation at staff meetings and other events</li> <li>• Small jobs at the festival office</li> <li>• Confirmation seminar (12/05), reflections on the theory and methodology</li> <li>• Festival launch (31/05)</li> </ul>
June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews and transcriptions</li> <li>• Participant observation at staff meetings and other events</li> <li>• Data entry job at the festival office (14/06–20/06)</li> <li>• First trip to Bowen (27/06–2/07); interviews and observations</li> </ul>
July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviews and transcriptions</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant observation at the festival office and rehearsals</li> <li>• A variety of small jobs every day at the festival office</li> <li>• July 15: Festival starts; <i>Vanuatu Water Music</i> shoot</li> <li>• July 16: <i>The Little Green Road to Fairy Land</i> performance; <i>Vanuatu Water Music</i> at South Bank</li> <li>• July 17: <i>Ailan Kores</i> webcast at GOMA</li> <li>• July 20: <i>Queensland Country Comfort Hour</i> concert</li> <li>• July 22: <i>Randy Newman</i> concert</li> <li>• July 23: Volunteer for <i>Meet me in the Middle of the Air</i> (Riverstage); VIP and sponsor function</li> <li>• July 24: <i>Stretch 'n' the Truth</i> concert (Powerhouse)</li> <li>• July 26: <i>Piano Lessons</i> preview</li> <li>• July 27–30: Second trip to Bowen; final dress rehearsal; two performances and functions; interviews</li> <li>• July 31: Festival finale; <i>Songtrails</i> concert (Powerhouse); <i>Vaporisation</i> concert; staff party</li> </ul>
August 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant observation at the festival office</li> <li>• Small jobs and wrap-up</li> <li>• Follow-up interviews and transcriptions</li> </ul>
September – December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personal information de-identified</li> <li>• Data analysis</li> <li>• Reflections</li> </ul>

Table 1: Research time line (Jan—Dec 2011) and summary of key events

### 3.2.1 Description of the Setting

I spent a considerable amount of time during my field work at the QMF office in Brisbane, which I will describe below. A drawing of the office set-up can be found in Appendix 1. I also describe the two community projects that I took a closer look at, the *Behind the Cane* project in Bowen and the *Drag Queen'sLand* project in Brisbane in order to give the reader an idea of what the research setting looked like (Creswell, 2013).

The QMF office is located in Brisbane, Queensland. The seven permanent staff members and approximately 35 production, administrative and marketing professionals during each festival season share this office. It is on the second floor of a shared building and can be entered through the stairway from the outside car park or the elevator from the ground level. Both doors lead directly to the reception area of the festival office, which consists of a counter, desk, and a small waiting area (a table and two chairs) as well as a big screen where the latest festival news are shown. Behind the reception there is a small meeting room. The red sliding door leads to a room of approximately four square metres with a round table and several chairs. The walls are decorated with photos, posters and maps of Queensland. Furthermore, there is a telephone and computer with a large screen. The meeting room can thus also be used for Skype sessions or for meetings that require the showing of photos and videos on the screen. I frequently used this room for conducting interviews with staff members.

Adjacent to the meeting room is the marketing office, which is shared by six people. This room with its large windows is very light and warm when the sun is shining. The marketing director's desk is located in the back corner of the room. Along the window side and the opposite wall are another five desks which are occupied by marketing and development professionals during the festival season, as well as a ticketing and functions coordinator and a casual social media support member. The bookshelf is full of orange folders, brochures and other marketing material from previous festivals. All team members enjoy the open office set-up; there only are small dividers between their desks.

Next to the reception is also the entrance to the main office, the largest room of the festival office. Clockwise starting on the left side, next to the door, is a copy machine and several shelves. Right behind that is the executive director's office, another small room with a desk, several chairs and bookshelves and a large window. His door however is almost always open. Next to his office are the finance and operation manager's desk and the program director's desk. Both of these staff members are part

of the permanent team. Again, they are only separated by dividers between their desks. Adjacent to these two desks is the artistic director's office in the far corner of the room, which resembles the executive director's in its set-up. Therefore, these two staff members are the only ones who have private offices. Everybody else shares the main office or the marketing office.

Along the other side of the room is the technical director's desk and back-to-back the logistic coordinator's desk. Right next to them is one of the 'pods'—a team consisting of a producer, a project coordinator and a technical manager—sitting next to each other so that they can communicate easily. Some additional computers and chairs can be used for their secondments, mainly university students who support the different teams and pods during the festival season. In the middle of the room are several more desks where the other 'pods' are sitting together in teams of two or three. These different pods are separated by dividers in a cross-shape. However, if they stand up, they can see all the other staff members in the room. All desks are equipped with a computer and telephone, as well as a pin board. Other main features of the large office are bookshelves, printers, some extra computers, maps and a white board that shows a table of all the events that are happening, where and when they are happening and who is responsible for which event (for a copy of this roster see Appendix 2). Furthermore, across the entire office there are several photos and posters from previous festivals showing artists, performances and staff members on their trips to regional communities or other events. Across the hallway a small staircase leads to three more rooms: the board room to the left, which includes a large oval table and about 25 chairs, a storage room on the right, where merchandise and marketing material is stored, and behind this room there is a small kitchen which can be used by everyone.

For my field work I chose different locations to observe the culture of the festival organisation. I frequently sat in the main office, occupying different desks. Quite often I had to move around when a certain spot was needed by another staff member. I did not mind moving around though, as it gave me a chance to observe the

atmosphere in the main office from different angles. Furthermore, this allowed me to spend time with different teams or pods, rather than merely focusing on just one team. I also spent quite a lot of time at the reception and in the hallway, observing people as they walked in and out of the office and helping out with small jobs. In the marketing office I usually occupied whichever desk was free for the day. It was quite easy to observe the entire marketing office from any spot in the room. Finally, I also often used the meeting room for interviews or when I needed some quiet time to jot down notes. The meeting room can be used by everyone, but has to be booked through the receptionist. Whenever somebody else needed the room, I simply moved to another desk.

The two community projects I examined in more depth—*Behind the Cane* and *Drag Queen’sLand*—were quite different in their style, but both told the stories of particular communities. The table below provides a summary of the key differences between the two projects.

	<i>Behind the Cane</i>	<i>Drag Queen’sLand</i>
<b>Project preparation</b>	3 years	> 1 year
<b>Location</b>	Bowen Soundshell (outdoors)	Brisbane (Judith Wright Centre)
<b>Style</b>	Community cultural development project <i>with</i> the community	Professional piece <i>about</i> the drag community
<b>Topic</b>	History of the South Sea Islander community in Bowen	Challenges and issues of being a drag queen in Queensland
<b>Tickets</b>	Free	\$25–42
<b># of performances</b>	3	7
<b># of audience</b>	Approx. 8.000 total	Approx. 120 per performance
<b>People on stage</b>	Approx. 120: band, choir, children’s choir, actors, dancers	3 professional actors, 2 musicians
<b>Restrictions</b>	None	18+ event
<b>Organisation</b>	Entire team contracted	QMF pod and contractors

Table 2: Comparison of *Behind the Cane* and *Drag Queen’sLand*

### 3.2.2 *Behind the Cane*

*Behind the Cane* was a community cultural development project commissioned and presented by QMF. It was organised over a three-year period through collaboration between the festival organisation, the regional council and the South Sea Islander community in Bowen. Bowen is a small town with a population of approximately 8,000 people located in North Queensland, between Townsville and Mackay. *Behind the Cane* told the history of thousands of South Sea Islanders being kidnapped ('blackbirded') and brought to Queensland to work on sugar cane farms between 1863 and 1906 (Colbert, 1997; Docker, 1970; Graves, 1993; Wawn, 1973). Almost all the cast on stage (except for the 'white' cast members) were descendants from South Sea Islanders, representing their own family members—great-great grandparents, uncles or aunts. The aim was to make them feel proud of their family, to tell their story and all the challenges they had to face in the past and to a certain extent still have to face today. During the creative development process, interviews were conducted with community members and their voices were made heard in the piece. In some songs their vernacular language was used. The work was very emotional and confronting for participants and audience members, but cast members felt proud of their ancestors and that their story was finally told.

The performance was presented at the Bowen Soundshell which features an outdoor stage next to the beach. There were three performances on 28, 29 and 30 July 2011, each with approximately 120 people on stage: a band, choir, children's choir (from three different schools), actors and dancers. The Bowen Cultural Festival took place on the same weekend, including several stalls and tents put up around the stage. Both events were free. Over the three nights, there was a total audience of about 8,000 people coming not only from Bowen but also surrounding towns, such as Proserpine, Ayr and Mackay (personal communication, July 2011).

In terms of organisation and creative development, the piece was put together by two writers (who themselves conducted the interviews with community members), two composers, a director, designer, and a production and technical team on the ground (all contracted by QMF). Over the three years, they worked closely together with the South Sea Islander community and the regional council and made several trips to Bowen. The QMF permanent staff was involved in that process as well. The entire production team then moved to Bowen approximately three months before the show and from then rehearsals took place every day. They rehearsed in a local school hall for several months, then later moved to the Soundshell. Every cast member received an individual and detailed rehearsal schedule to ensure the piece was going to come together in the end. They started with small scenes and individual rehearsals, often just discussing where, when and how to enter or exit the stage. There were quite a lot of one-on-one rehearsals with the director and composers as well, which gave the entirely non-professional cast a chance to develop new skills. Then they moved on to putting entire scenes together and made sure everybody understood the broader context of their role. Finally, the band was brought in and they started singing and dancing to live music.

### *3.2.3 Drag Queen'sLand*

The project *Drag Queen'sLand* was also a community project commissioned and presented by QMF 2011. It was over one year in the making and a work about challenges and issues of being a drag queen in Queensland (a state with a historically hostile relationship with the queer community). The show was presented at the Judith Wright Centre in Brisbane and thus represented an urban community arts piece, rather than a project in regional Queensland. Similar to the *Behind the Cane* project, interviews with drag queens in Brisbane were conducted and their stories were told in the show. However, there were no drag queens on stage; rather they were represented by three professional actors. The main reason for this decision was that the work was QMF's interpretation of what it means to be a drag queen in Queensland. Nevertheless, the drag community felt ownership of the piece as they were included in every major decision along the way and contributed not only their stories but also advice and support during the creative development process.

There were a total of seven shows between 15 July and 23 July 2011. The show was presented at the Judith Wright Centre in a cabaret-style setting, with a small stage in the middle of the room and several tables around the stage, which created a very intimate atmosphere. The three actors were on stage all the time. Even costume changes were made on stage as part of the show, because it was argued that this is an important part of being a drag queen. Furthermore, two musicians were sitting next to the stage playing live. Tickets were between 25 and 42 Australian dollars. The brochure and flier also emphasised that it was an 18+ event containing “violence, adult themes, nudity, offensive language and theatrical smoke effects” (QMF brochure 2011).

The piece was written by two writers and two composers. The creative team also included a dramaturge and a designer. It was entirely managed from the QMF office in Brisbane with one of the pods being mainly responsible for the show; a producer, a technical manager and a project coordinator. Meetings usually took place at the festival office. The rehearsals started approximately three weeks before the show, but costume fittings and production meetings go further back.

### *3.3 Ethical Clearance*

Ethical clearance was obtained from Griffith University in January 2011. An agreement between myself, the QMF Chair and the Executive Director was signed on February 3, 2011. These protocols have been followed and all research materials relating to individuals and their roles have been de-identified and confidentiality maintained as part of the ethical requirements of the project. All participants were informed about the research and the researcher’s presence before, during and after the festival. Original recordings were deleted and interview transcripts were sent back to those participants who wished to see them; three of them asked for minor changes and

clarifications. In the interview quotes and field notes that I use throughout the thesis, I use pseudonyms when participants talk about other members of the organisation. The interview quotes are only labelled as 'interview' to avoid being able to identify who said what. I do, however, include the date of the interview, as this was an important part of the research project in terms of the festival life cycle.

### ***3.4 Methods and Key Events***

The case study research approach uses multiple sources of evidence in order to draw a detailed picture of the issue under study. In order to become familiar with the QMF culture, which is an essential part of understanding the shared meaning between festival members (Benton & Craib, 2001), and to explore different views on the topic of knowledge management within the festival case study, I used ethnographic methods of data collection, namely participant observation and in-depth semi-structured interviews. I also collected various documents to contextualise the festival experience. These methods were carried out over a period of several months to be able to track changes within the festival life cycle and to see the organisation change shape over time. The broader context within which these changes take place was explored and changes in perception of knowledge management factors were identified (J. Lewis, 2003).

#### ***3.4.1 Ethnography***

Ethnography is characterised by studying people in their everyday settings and involves the researcher directly participating in the setting. Ethnographic research developed in the 1920s and 1930s when social anthropologists such as Malinowski (1884-1943), Mead (1901-1978) and Bateson (1904-1980) went to explore non-Western cultures and spent an extended period of time with them in order to understand the culture of the group within their natural setting (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Holloway, et al., 2010). Their fieldwork aimed to understand the actions of people within certain cultures as well as their interactions with each other.



Without imposing their own worldview upon participants, these anthropologists took an inductive approach to understanding social reality from within. The data gathered was very rich and provided “thick descriptions” (Geertz, 1973, p. 3) of the culture under study. Not imposing their own worldviews, however, was – and is – a challenge for ethnographers and is subject to each ethnographer’s theoretical approach. Geertz (1973, p. 21-22) initially distinguished between “microscopic” (localised) and “natural experiment” (aiming for “purer” and “more solid” data) approaches to ethnography. Following this, a debate among ethnographers has emerged in regards to how different theoretical approaches can be used to discuss the process of immersing oneself in other cultures. Naturalists argued that, “the social world should be studied in its ‘natural’ state, undisturbed by the researcher” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 7). While naturalists asked the question ‘what is going on?’, constructionists later critiqued this approach and aimed to identify “*how* social realities are produced, assembled, and maintained” (Holstein & Gubrium, 2008, p. 374-375). The role of language, talk and interaction was emphasised, which required ethnographers to engage in more reflexive fieldwork (Hall, 1997a; Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007; Holstein & Gubrium, 2008). The postmodern/post-structural perspective on ethnography, finally, highlights the study of “othered people” (Lather, 2001, p. 481) particularly analysing historical and social structures that produce power relations and certain meanings. Representation has therefore become an essential part of the study of culture as it emphasises the process of producing and exchanging meaning through language (Hall, 1997a).

Based on the original principles of ethnography as well as recent debates in the field, modern ethnography today is not limited to the study of non-Western cultures anymore (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). Over the last decades, ethnography has become a popular research method in sociology, and has also been applied to the fields of management (e.g., Orr, 1996; Schultze, 2000; Carlile, 2002; Van Maanen, 2011), tourism (O’Gorman et al., 2012) and leisure studies (Cohen, 1993; Sparkes, 2009; Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2012). The ethnographic research approach is only starting to be used in contemporary festival and event settings (Getz, 2010; Holloway, et al., 2010), particularly to study the festival experience from the participants’ perspective

(Cummings, 2007; Mackellar, 2013). It can, however, also be used to study the management of festivals and events.

Applying the same techniques as traditional anthropological and ethnographic studies, the researcher spends an extended period of time with the participants in the organisation, observes and participates in day-to-day practices and key events, and becomes fully immersed in the culture of the organisation (Brewer, 2000; Creswell, 2013; Humphreys, Brown, & Hatch, 2003; Kellehear, 1993; O'Gorman, MacLaren, & Bryce, 2012; Shipway, Holloway, & Jones, 2012; Shipway & Jones, 2009). Ethnography hence includes participant observation, usually together with in-depth interviews; it is however more than that as “(...) ethnographers seek detailed knowledge of the multiple dimensions of life within the studied milieu and aim to understand members’ taken-for-granted assumptions and rules” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 21). Participant observation is crucial as “[a]ctions can make implicit meanings visible” (Charmaz, 2004, p. 981) and gives the researcher an opportunity to come to understand the taken for granted culture of the group. The observation can therein be conducted in an overt or covert manner, meaning that either all organisational members know about the researcher’s presence or the researcher’s true identity remains a secret. Either way, the challenge for the participant observer is to maintain a balance between ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ perspective, or as Corbin Dwyer and Buckle (2009, p. 61) argued, to rather occupy the “space between” and to constantly move between the two extremes of being an insider and outsider. The researcher needs to get close with the participants and situation under study, but at the same time step back and maintain a certain distance in order to be able to professionally observe and collect the data (Ashworth, 1995; Davies, 2008; Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006; Vinten, 1994).

Maintaining a distance yet aiming to get close to participants made it very difficult for me to critically look at relational knowledge management within QMF. At times being involved too much in the festival experience as an insider, made it difficult to step back and critically reflect on what had happened as an outsider. At other times, I

moved back to feeling like a complete stranger to the festival team, particularly as new members joined the team prior to the festival. I thus lacked the necessary relationships and trust in order to understand their points of view. Occupying the ‘space between’ as an insider and outsider to the organisation did, however, represent the journey of becoming a member of the organisation and acquiring the relevant relationships within a short period of time.

I undertook overt participant observation of the QMF culture over a period of seven months (February to August 2011). The festival itself took place in July 2011. Following the life cycle of a festival organisation, I felt it was important to spend a significant amount of time with the organisation before the festival season, as well as a few weeks after the festival in order to experience the different stages the organisation goes through. The executive director presented my ideas to the board of directors who gave their consent for the research to be undertaken. A project proposal was then signed by the chair of the board, the executive director and myself detailing that I would be allowed to attend all meetings and key events except for board meetings. Afterwards, the executive director invited me to introduce myself and to present my research to the festival staff during the first full staff meeting on 3 February 2011, where the core team of about 30 people got together at the festival office. It was an exciting day for everybody and the beginning of our festival journey. At this initial meeting I presented my research ideas to the staff and explained the research and data collection methods. I distributed the information sheets and informed consent forms and answered their questions. There were some concerns among the staff that the interviews would be too time-consuming during the festival; however I told them that I would make sure they did not interfere with important jobs. I also offered to help out with small jobs at the office to demonstrate my support for the festival and to build rapport. From then on, staff meetings, workshops, concerts, and other key events were attended before, during, and after the festival. The method allowed a comprehensive in-depth description of the knowledge management practices and processes, communication challenges and other issues at the festival within its natural cultural context.

An important part of ethnographic research is taking field notes. Field notes are written accounts of observed events, descriptions of settings, as well as the researcher's accounts of members' experiences, concerns and meanings. Furthermore, in field notes, the researcher constructs her own process of becoming a member of the organisation, which was particularly interesting for my research in terms of learning and acquiring organisational knowledge. Taking field notes over a long period of time also allows the researcher to track changes, which was another important aspect for my research in terms of the festival life cycle (Bogdan, 1972; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995; Lofland, et al., 2006; Waddington, 1994). I took field notes sometimes during but mostly after my observations. These field notes include descriptions of different settings, events, participants and the festival atmosphere, as well as informal discussions with festival members. They also describe my process of becoming a member (Sjoestedt Landen, 2011) of the festival organisation and acquiring organisational knowledge. Going back to these field notes at a later time allowed me to reflect upon earlier observations and identify changes in my own as well as participants' perceptions and meaning.

In March 2011, I started to not only attend the staff meetings but also other key events at the festival office, such as induction sessions, and spent time with various teams and individual staff members at the office. Field notes were taken during and after all these events. I also took on some small roles and helped out with small jobs. I still felt very much like an outsider to the team, which was partially due to my role as the researcher and my infrequent visits, but also—coming from Austria—my nationality and background. Even though language was not a problem, I did struggle with understanding the broader Australian festival context and community arts focus and how QMF fitted into this scene. In my field notes I described this journey and the difficulties I faced. During that time, I also began to rethink the focus of my project and my research question. I noticed that these decisions were now influenced by what I had already experienced at the festival organisation.

I also continuously collected information from the QMF website, the festival brochure, meeting minutes, e-mails and other texts and used them to contextualise the festival identity and experience. I was officially added to the QMF e-mail list in March 2011 and now regularly received newsletters and staff e-mails. These texts do not represent objective facts, but are constructed for specific purposes and in particular contexts (Charmaz, 2006). All these texts therefore provide different 'representations' of meaning not in terms of a reflection of the 'real world', but rather in terms of the discourses that shaped the QMF organisational culture and identity (S. Hall, 1997a). Meaning is represented through a certain discourse, for example about community empowerment, that is connected to knowledge production and regulation in terms of how to engage professionally with communities. Knowledge is thus created and mobilised in specific situations and regulated through a certain festival context and history. The power/knowledge relation and discursive field were therefore examined in order to identify how meaning was constructed through festival documents, images and by participants, and where this meaning came from.

All these parts of the research went on during the month of April and I slowly but surely started feeling like a member of the team. Around that time I realised that it would be impossible to observe everything that was going on at QMF. Thus, in discussion with the executive director, I decided to focus on two particular community projects: the *Behind the Cane* project in Bowen and the *Drag Queen's Land* project in Brisbane. Both of these were community cultural development and community arts projects but were very different in terms of their themes and scope. With this in mind, I thus aimed to look at two particular cases within the bigger case study, as well as the core team at the festival office in Brisbane.

In May I had my confirmation seminar at Griffith University, which gave me an opportunity to reflect on the theory and methodology. Afterwards I started to focus entirely on the festival, to spend more time with festival members and to become involved more. As I became more and more part of the team and organisation, I realised that QMF was run very professionally and that I needed to change the focus

of my research from a ‘problem-solving’ approach to an approach that emphasised the strengths of the organisation and how these strengths can be used in the future for QMF to become an even more successful organisation in terms of knowledge management.

On 31 May 2013, the festival had its official program launch event at the Judith Wright Centre in Brisbane. I attended this event and gained an even clearer picture of what was ahead of me. The event also gave me a chance to develop rapport with staff members on a more personal level, as we had a post-event celebration. For the first time I felt like ‘one of them’ as an insider and was proud to be part of the team. We also took a team photo all wearing our QMF T-shirts. The photo is still on the pin board in my office as a reminder of the memorable experience I had with the team. Soon after the program launch event I moved on to the next step of my research journey: conducting in-depth interviews.

#### *3.4.2 In-Depth Semi-Structured Interviews*

The purpose of in-depth interviews is to understand the research topic from the participant’s perspective within the context of his or her experience and history. In-depth interviews also allow the researcher to explore different levels of meaning from the participant’s perspective (J. Lewis, 2003). The participant is therefore, together with the researcher, actively shaping the course of the interview, rather than simply answering pre-set questions (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Peraekylae, 2005). The interview is interactive, and it combines structured questions with flexibility. Preparing an interview guide with important topics to be covered, questions and probes is essential (Legard, Keegan, & Ward, 2003). However, the researcher needs to be flexible during the interview itself, as new ideas might arise throughout the discussion. The interviews therefore were an opportunity to discuss some of my observations. I started with several questions on festival members’ personal background and experience, as well as some general questions about the festival atmosphere and sense of community. Then I moved on to more challenging and more sensitive questions about knowledge, knowledge management and organisational learning (see Appendix 4 for

a list of initial interview questions). Most questions that I asked were positive and “open-ended opportunities for storytelling” (Michael, 2005, p. 224). I aimed at getting participants to tell me stories, experiences and examples of the collaborative festival culture, ways of working together and the community cultural development ethos of QMF, and thus I unconsciously started to adapt an Appreciative Inquiry approach to my research.

From June 2011 until August 2011, I completed 23 interviews and five follow-up interviews with various organisational members who were the key informants of my project. Participation in interviews was completely voluntary. The interviews occurred once or more often before, during, and after the festival season (June 2011—August 2011) to cover the temporal dimension of the festival. This option was voluntary too. The sample group for the interviews was composed of a variety of festival members: permanent staff, volunteers, board members, contractors, artists, members of the communities, etc. The aim was to have a range of representations; not only the core team, but also participants with different backgrounds, levels of involvement, and newcomers as well as long-term members. A method of ‘purposive sampling’ was used because it ensures that the chosen participants “have particular features or characteristics which will enable detailed exploration and understanding of the central themes and puzzles which the researcher wishes to study” (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2003, p. 78). In my particular study this related to the participants’ experience and roles. I used my personal contact with the core team (permanent staff members at the Brisbane office) as a first step in recruiting participants. Then a snowball sampling method was used to find other potential participants, whereby members of the core team acted as an introductory liaison. Furthermore, through participation in key events, it was possible to identify potential interviewees and to contact them directly. An information e-mail and/or information sheet was provided to all participants prior to the interview and the research aims and ethical considerations were explained. Consent forms were signed and returned prior to the interview (see Appendix 5 and Appendix 6 **Error! Reference source not found.** for the informed consent information sheet and form).

At the festival office site in Brisbane I employed a particular interviewing strategy: The first two interviews were conducted with staff members I already felt quite close with and had established some sort of relationship. These two participants also were rather talkative and offered a means of piloting a wide range of initial questions and topics. I then completed some interviews with staff members who I had not spent time with before, or did not know that well, a strategy that is also commonly used with the Appreciative Inquiry approach—although I was not consciously aware of that at the time—in order to uncover new ways of thinking and to get a broader understanding of different people’s experiences (Whitney, et al., 2010). I aimed to gain further insight as I knew little about their particular role or job. In line with Rubin and Rubin’s (2005) strategy for organisational culture research, specific QMF terms were explored in these interviews as well as what staff members had learned through experience and how these experiences were shared with others. Based on this initial set of interviews, the interview questions were revised before interviewing the executive director, the artistic director and two board members.

How I used my interview guide therefore constantly changed, based on my observations, interpretations and reflections. Some questions were added, while others were omitted or changed (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Holliday, 2007; King, 1994). I kept track of these changes in my research diary. In particular, I realised that I needed to put more emphasis on the community cultural development focus of the organisation, issues around the creative development processes of these programs and how they impacted upon relational knowledge management practices. I also noticed that QMF was managed very professionally and there were no major problematic incidents. After several interviews and informal conversations with QMF members, I therefore decided to change the focus of my research from ‘what are the knowledge management problems within QMF?’ to ‘why does knowledge management work so well within QMF and why is the festival so successful?’ Allowing for changes in the research topic is an important element of qualitative and ethnographic interviewing (Heyl, 2001; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I also started to intuitively apply an Appreciative Inquiry approach to the interviews as well as observations. Through my reading of the



Appreciative Inquiry literature I began to make the connections between my method, analysis and conceptual approach.

Overall I conducted 12 interviews with staff members at the festival office in Brisbane; six of them belonged to the permanent staff, the other six were seasonal staff members. I interviewed three of them twice; before and after the festival. Furthermore, two of my participants were board members, two were associated with the *Drag Queen'sLand* project and seven were part of the *Behind the Cane* team. Again, two of these people were interviewed twice. Interviewing some participants twice allowed me not only to seek clarification for their previous answers (King, 1994; Legard et al., 2003), but also to explore how their experiences and certain meanings have changed over the festival life cycle. Out of the 12 female and 11 male interview participants, eight were newcomers, that is, they experienced their first QMF festival season in 2011. These participants represented the younger cohort; many of them were in their twenties. The other 15 were experienced, meaning they had been involved in at least one QMF festival before. All participants were Australian or had been living in Australia for at least a decade (see Appendix 7 for a table summarising the characteristics of my interview participants and their involvement).

Furthermore, part of my strategy was to cover a wide range of roles and jobs in order to explore similarities and dissimilarities (Rubin & Rubin, 2005) in festival members' experiences. I wanted to interview at least five of the seven permanent team members and three of them before and after the festival. This did not quite work out as planned; I ended up with six core staff interviews, but only two follow-ups. With the other staff members in Brisbane, I selected one member from each 'pod' covering all the different roles. I interviewed the technical manager from one pod, the producer from another, the project coordinator from the third pod and a secondment from the fourth pod. Two of them were interviewed before the festival, one during the festival and one after the festival. With the two community projects I focused on, I simply interviewed as many people as I could in as many different roles as possible. Again,

some of these interviews occurred before, others during or after the festival and some participants were interviewed twice.

The interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes and were conducted at a location of the participants' choice. This included for example the meeting room at the festival office, nearby cafes, and at times even green rooms and backstage areas. The interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder. Subsequent interviews were conducted approximately after three to five weeks to enable me to document processes of change. Furthermore, through taking field notes after each interview, I critically reflected not only on *what* participants spoke about, but also *how* they identified key issues during the interview (Fontana & Frey, 2005; Holliday, 2007).

In June, things thus got busy at the festival office not only for the staff but also for me. I conducted a lot of my interviews during that time, and quite often had to reschedule interview dates due to last minute changes at the festival office. There was a lot going on and the excitement grew. Based on my previous experience in working for festival organisations, however, this was exactly what I expected. I continuously emphasised that rearranging interview dates was not a problem as I now spent almost every day at the festival office anyway. At the same time giving something back and reciprocating the good will was important to me. Then I was asked to help out with a data entry job for a week. It seemed to be the perfect job; I contributed something useful, became part of the team, but at the same time was able to continue my observations and interviews. My field notes during that week, however, became shorter as I was extremely exhausted and tired because of this job. The intensity of ethnographic fieldwork commonly poses stress and fatigue onto the researcher (Van Maanen, 2011) and it was hence no surprise that I felt overwhelmed and exhausted especially during the lead-up to the festival season which is a stressful period of time in itself. After spending the entire day in front of the computer entering data into spreadsheets and databases, writing up detailed field notes of what I had observed was impossible. I realised that this was only the beginning, that things would get even more stressful once the festival began and started to critically think about how this

might change the way I write up my notes and reflect on them. I even started to occasionally just record my notes and transcribed them later. This strategy seemed to work well especially during the busiest time of the festival.

### *3.4.3 Full Immersion*

Later in June 2011 I made my first trip to Bowen and attended some of the rehearsals there and to conduct a range of interviews with the team on the ground. These five days were a crucial research experience. I was extremely nervous when I left Brisbane and the 'safe' festival office environment behind, because I knew how long it had taken the team to establish trust and relationships with the South Sea Islander community in Bowen. I simply was afraid of saying something or doing something that would offend them. Once in Bowen, however, I was warmly welcomed and integrated into the team. The importance of my ethnographic approach became apparent, because I quickly noticed that the community members who I met did not want to do recorded interviews. However, some of them wanted to meet for a coffee and we had an informal talk about the project and about their background. I thus gained valuable information, but in a 'safe' setting without risking stepping on their toes or ruining some of the relationships that QMF had built over such a long period of time. Not using formal research methods was crucial in this situation in terms of gaining trust and respect with the participants. I noticed and reflected on the issue of power as a researcher and how sensitive research can be with people from other cultures.

Furthermore, being so far away from the busy festival office I had the opportunity to focus on this particular project without any distractions. That was something I noticed being very different with the *Drag Queen's Land* project, which was taking place in Brisbane. Therefore, even though a lot of the meetings associated with this project took place at the festival office, I was often unable to attend because there were so many other important things going on at the same time. In Bowen, however, there was nothing else going on and I could fully immerse myself in the rehearsal experience during that week.

Back in Brisbane in the first week of July, I conducted some more interviews but then mainly focused on my observations as I realised that the team was getting too busy. While I was away a lot of new people had joined the team at the office. Secondments were brought on board, as well as drivers and coordinators. There now were a lot of small jobs that I could help out with, which kept me busy too. During some of the breaks I started transcribing the interviews so that I was prepared to do follow-ups whenever possible. The transcribing and similar sorts of mechanical jobs were possible during the entire time of the festival. However, at this point I had reached a stage where it became almost impossible to think and critically reflect on my observations and the entire research process, similar to what Sjöstedt Landen experienced in her ethnography (2011, p. 548, emphasis in original):

“(…) what was revealed in the analysis of my field notes were the limitations to the fieldworker’s reflections during the research process, since *she is in process*. It took time to gather the necessary ‘historical’ knowledge to possess the ability to reflect over other’s actions; it required at least a history of this particular research process.”

At this stage I was exhausted and my brain was completely full with what was happening on a day-to-day basis. I realised that I would have to save my reflections for later. On the other hand I understood that this immense workload and stress was a common issue in festival management and thus one of the problems I needed to deal with in more detail.

At the same time, excitement started to rise as well. We were getting closer to the opening of the 2011 festival season and the atmosphere at the office was phenomenal. On July 15 the festival kicked off and an exciting period full of events started. The events mentioned in Table 1 above are the ones I attended; however, there was much more going on. At times I was struggling with coming to terms that it was only possible to observe certain events and not others. I could only be at one place at any given point in time and missed out on a lot that was going on elsewhere. But I fully

enjoyed the events I was part of and absorbed every little detail of them. The diverse range of events was astonishing; QMF really offered something for everyone. The environment and emotion work were intense, though. Quite often I had to get up early, spend time with the team and work at the office all day, attend an event or performance in the evening and write up my field notes in the middle of the night.

During the festival there were plenty of jobs to take care of. Staff members now specifically approached me for certain things and I even became an 'expert' in particular jobs. I helped out with allocating VIP tickets, sending out mass e-mails, copying and filing invoices, entering data and volunteering at the Riverstage, to mention just a few of my duties. Thus working with a vast range of people in different roles allowed me to experience many different elements of the festival. I learned from and with the staff and shared the excitement. During the last weekend of July I also made another trip to Bowen, attended the *Behind the Cane* performance and conducted some follow-up interviews. Again I found myself in a totally different setting and could fully concentrate on what was going on in Bowen. At the same time missing out on the *Opera at Jimbour* event which was going on the same day was a shame, as it apparently was one of the highlights. Furthermore, I knew that once back in Brisbane it would already be the festival finale, but did not want it to be over yet.

On the final day of the festival, 31 July 2011, I attended two more concerts before we all headed to the staff party. In speeches everyone on the team was acknowledged and the hard work was finally over. There was a strong sense of relief among the team, everybody was relaxed and joyful but at the same time sad that the festival was over. Despite all the stress, it had been an amazing journey and nobody was yet ready to move on. The following summary describes my experience with the festival in retrospect:

It's not quite over yet, but here's a brief summary of my festival research experience: I worked 24/7 for six weeks; attended 27 meetings; conducted and transcribed 23 interviews (another 5 are scheduled for this week and next week); wrote 319 pages of field notes (...); attended 13 rehearsals and 14 performances

at 11 different venues; collected a box full of QMF material; helped out with data entry, spreadsheets, mass-e-mails, mailings, VIP tickets and functions, ushering, sorting 468 bottles of wine (yes, I counted them!), copying, scanning and filing; made two trips to Bowen and was absolutely blown away by this project; spent 10 hours per week on the bus; spent over 200 dollars on public transport and taxi fares (glad I can use my research budget for that!); drank too much coffee; suffered from lack of sleep, mental fatigue and confusion; met a lot of incredible people; drove most of them crazy by constantly looking over their shoulder, taking notes and asking “yes, but why...?!”; and loved it, loved it, loved it!! QMF is a wonderful festival; I have never seen anything like that before. The team is absolutely amazing, I am going to miss them all.

My final diary entry on Sunday after the staff party says: “As I walk down the street to catch the bus, tears start filling my eyes. I can’t believe it’s over! It has been an incredible journey that I will never forget...” Now I can’t quite let go yet. I still hang out at the festival office every day and help out with small jobs. I am not yet ready to move on ... (e-mail, 03/08/11)

In regards to the amount of time I spent with QMF, I felt at this point that I had experienced both the lead-up to the festival as well as the festival itself and become a true insider. Spending “an extended period of time” (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007, p. 3) in the field is crucial for ethnographers in order to understand the culture from within and to become fully accepted within the research setting. While at this stage I felt I had spent enough time with the organisation, had collected a wide range of and thick data and had become ‘one of them’, I still wanted to experience the post-festival stage. In August 2011 I therefore made a few more trips to the festival office and helped out with some of the documentation, filing and evaluation. Finally, some follow-up interviews with the staff were also conducted. However, it was—again—quite difficult to get those interviews, because the level of motivation had dropped significantly once the festival was over and everyone, not only the team but also myself, was exhausted and tired. It was difficult to focus on this last set of interviews; my time with the festival was more or less over. 16 August 2011 marked my last day at the festival office. In a final attempt to conclude the data collection and first phase of analysis, I forced myself to finish transcribing all the interviews and field note recordings before going on holiday for three weeks. Refreshed after a holiday on the

beach, I was then ready to tackle the next stage of my research: I de-identified all personal information and started sorting the data and thus began a more thorough analysis of my findings.

### ***3.5 Analysis, Validity and Reliability***

In regards to data analysis, Sharpe (2005a, p. 262) maintained that in ethnographic research, data analysis:

“(…) involves identifying patterns of behavior—in the form of rituals, routines, and practices—that become apparent through sustained field observation (or, from interviews, in an emerging pattern of shared beliefs among members of the culture). Once an initial amount of data is collected, data collection and analysis become concurrent, whereby the early “theories” offered to explain such patterns guide subsequent analyses, and the theories are thus refined or rejected.”

The aim of analysis is thus to interpret a range of data to identify themes that shaped the festival identity and knowledge management practices for participants. It is an iterative, inductive process and occurs concurrently with data collection. The steps described below therefore overlap and were at times taken simultaneously (Brewer, 2000; DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006; Green et al., 2007).

*Immersion in the data* was the first step in the process of analysis (Green, et al., 2007). I transcribed the interviews verbatim, read and re-read these transcripts as well as my field notes in order to develop some first ideas about the issue under study. The seven interview participants who had indicated on their informed consent form that they wanted a copy of the transcript, received it for their perusal. Three of them asked me to make minor changes or clarified their statements. Throughout the process of immersion in the data I also reflected on some of my earlier observations and thought

critically about what had happened and why. I noticed, for example, that as I became more and more immersed in the field, I had started to adopt some of the staff members' thinking and understanding. I did not realise this at the time, but through re-reading my field notes it became clear that I had become 'one of them' and adopted their culture and language, and therefore was unable to reflect on my own actions at the time. In terms of knowledge management this became a crucial observation, in addition to my identification with the organisation that needed to be recognised as an important element of festival organising and community cultural development. Moreover, through the supervision relationship I was able to engage in critical reflection and refine my research questions to identify power/knowledge as well as Appreciative Inquiry. These reflections later shaped how I identified key themes.

The next step was to *code* the data, that is, to apply a label to blocks of transcripts and field notes (see Appendix 8 for a set of initial codes). In this process it is important to be clear about the meaning of each code and the context in which statements in interviews were made (Green, et al., 2007). Using the software package NVivo facilitated the process, as it allowed me to code not only transcripts and field notes but also other documents, e-mails, newsletters and drawings and other material and to easily change codes. I started with four interview transcripts that seemed to raise diverse issues from different perspectives and created an initial set of nodes, sibling nodes and child nodes (Bazeley, 2007).

After this first stage of coding, I added, refined, combined or deleted some of the initial nodes and moved on to the other transcripts, field notes and documents (Evers, 2011; Green, et al., 2007; Ritchie, Spencer, & O'Connor, 2003; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). For example, the initial code 'shared understanding' – including the QMF history, vision and strategy – was later refined and integrated into broader codes such as the QMF identity as well as community cultural development ethos. Particularly with coding my own field notes I often made comparisons between events or incidents rather than merely code line-by-line (Charmaz, 2006). I was aware that constructing knowledge through this process was influenced by my own experience



and growing conceptual understanding, as well as my interpretations and reflections. Using an open approach to analysis I realised that the story about knowledge management coming through was very positive. Therefore, I followed the discourses that emphasised positive experiences and identified problematic stories where they arose. I became more conscious of applying an Appreciative Inquiry approach as my understanding of issues in the literature and connections with the data became clearer.

The third part of data analysis was *creating categories*. Categories were created through an examination of ways in which nodes can be linked. The data and nodes were thus revisited and examined, in order to find nodes that shared a relationship. For example, I noticed that ‘commitment’ and ‘belonging to the organisation’ formed crucial elements of the organisational identity and thus created a broader category for these and related nodes. Exceptions and contradictions were also identified and sorted into different categories (Brewer, 2000; Green, et al., 2007; Holliday, 2007; Kellehear, 1993; Ritchie, Spencer, et al., 2003; Rubin & Rubin, 2005). The categories and subcategories I developed showed links between codes as well as represented how I made sense of the data and texts (Charmaz, 2006). I also noticed certain metaphors that my participants used to describe their festival experience, such as being part of the ‘QMF family’ and noted similarities and differences in them as well. In thematic analysis frequency is not an indicator of importance, equally important are issues that are *not* spoken of; so as part of this process, I also looked for omissions and absences, because “making anything present implies that other but related things are simultaneously being made absent” (Law, 2004, p. 144). I was, for example, surprised by the lack of problems and negative experiences that were talked about.

Apart from the analysis through codes and categories, I also frequently went back to the interviews and field notes in their entirety. It was important to not only explore the data using NVivo, but to also see where and how certain stories fitted within the context of the interview or my field notes (Cortazzi, 2001). Throughout this process I paid attention to the language my participants used in describing their experiences. Snowden (1999, p. 36) argued that, “stories, and the metaphors they contain, can

provide a new language for new forms of understanding” and the language expressed within these stories was a valuable means for practising knowledge creation and transfer. For example, I noticed that staff members did not use the QMF vision as such in describing their experiences, but their use of certain words and expressions was in line with the festival vision, identity and community cultural development ethos describing QMF as a ‘transformative festival’. Some stories, experiences or key events seemed particularly important and I manually highlighted and later analysed them within the context of the entire interview or field note description.

All texts (documents, transcripts, field notes, etc.) about the festival identity and the organisation’s sense of community are part of the festival discourse, and it is therefore important to understand the festival management in terms of this discursive level of meaning. The texts present the festival in different ways and I did not merely analyse the text in itself, but rather the context around it and particularly “look[ed] for the differences between texts without claiming that one of them is the only correct one” (McKee, 2003, 12-13). For example, I looked at different representations of the festival identity not only in my participants’ statements and stories but also in the festival brochure, press releases, fliers and e-mails. As mentioned earlier, my personal interpretation of these texts is not the only correct one or the only ‘truth’; rather, it is merely one possible interpretation based on the information available, the context, and my personal background and critical reflections (McKee, 2003; Saukko, 2003). The method of textual analysis also helped augment evidence from other sources, that is, from my observations and individual interviews (Forster, 1994; S. Hall, 1997a; Hardy & Clegg, 2004; Kaufmann, 2011; Yin, 2009).

Although very challenging, the process of analysing the data was exciting too, as it was a way for me to re-experience and relive the festival with all of its highlights and positive experiences. Two main themes and one overarching theme about the festival vision and organisational identity emerged out of the data that I wanted to focus on, and I started writing up my findings. The final step therefore was the *identification of themes*. This stage of data analysis required a shift to explanation and interpretation,

rather than mere description of the data (Charmaz, 2006; Holliday, 2007; Ritchie, Spencer, et al., 2003; Rubin & Rubin, 2005; Spencer, Ritchie, & O'Connor, 2003). Identifying themes also included linking the results from interview data to theory, because “[i]t is the task of the researcher to make the link between the accounts that are described and the claim to the knowledge produced” (Green, et al., 2007, p. 546). I thus moved from coding issues to considering a more discursive approach of analysis and began to identify important themes through writing. Even more ideas emerged through writing and rewriting my chapters after reflection with my supervisors, and I interpreted my findings in relation to the positive, collaborative culture of QMF. The supervision process thereby enabled a greater clarity about insider/outsider perspectives and the many “spaces between” (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 54) as both my supervisors acted as outsiders and helped me reflect on my (insider) experiences with the festival organisation.

The writing stages therefore formed an important part of the analytic process as “[e]ach successive draft grows more theoretical and comprehensive” (Charmaz, 2006, p. 154). I started to put an emphasis on the relational meaning of knowledge management, particularly my participants’ positive statements about ‘working with others’ and how these were shaped by the practices they engaged in and how they shaped knowledge practices in return. I came to understand that my role was to make explicit the strengths of the organisation in terms of collaboration and the co-creation of knowledge and therefore identified and interpreted my participants’ positive experiences within an appreciative framework (Michael, 2005). In addition I made explicit the taken for granted knowledge practices within QMF and highlighted how QMF used its core strengths to turn challenges into opportunities for organisational learning and gaining new experiences.

Throughout all stages of data analysis, the researcher needs to be aware of the influence he or she is bringing to the analysis (Alvesson & Skoeldberg, 2000; Holliday, 2007; O’Gorman, et al., 2012; Skinner & Edwards, 2005). A critical reflection on my own background and assumptions about what I was observing and

how I made sense of the data in every step taken was thus part of the entire data analysis process. During the stressful period of the festival, however, I noticed that at times it was impossible to reflect on what was happening and why. I thus made some of these reflections only once the festival was over and I finally had enough time to re-read my field notes, transcripts and other accounts. At the same time, the festival team quickly moved on to other jobs or other festivals. Only the core staff at the Brisbane office remained. Most of us are still in touch though, and I regularly stop by at the festival office to catch up with them. Over time, this made me realise how my research was only a partial construction of what happened at a certain place and time.

In qualitative research it is impossible to capture objective reality, and it was certainly not the goal of my research to discover the one and only ‘reality’ and ‘truth’ about knowledge management in music festivals. The combination of multiple methods, however, provided richness and depth to the issue under research. The terms validity, generalisability and reliability, as commonly used in quantitative research, therefore need to be re-interpreted for the qualitative research context (Creswell, 2013; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Lather, 1993; J. Lewis & Ritchie, 2003).

My research aimed to interpret the meanings that festival members attribute to knowledge management. The insights and stories interview participants told me about their festival experience were all different, yet shaped by the festival discourses about community empowerment and development. Richardson (2000) argued that post-structuralist researchers believe in more than three ways of approaching and understanding the world and thus she introduced the term crystallisation rather than triangulation as a metaphor for validity. She argued that, “the crystal (...) combines symmetry and substance with an infinite variety of shapes, substances, transmutations, multidimensionalities, and angles of approach. Crystals grow, change, and alter but are not amorphous” (Richardson, 2000, p. 13). Reality thus changes whenever the researcher changes the angle or perspective from which she looks at it (Saukko, 2003). Through crystallisation, therefore, I gained a deep and complex

understanding of the topic. However, I am aware and acknowledge that this understanding is only partial.

### ***3.6 Limitations***

Every research project is limited in time, money and resources. In a festival like QMF, there are many things going on at the same time; however I could only be at one place at any given point in time. QMF community projects were taking place all over the state of Queensland, and as time and resources were limited, I was not able to attend all of them. Thus, I could not be part of and observe everything, and therefore could not comment on the entirety of the festival. Furthermore, a common concern with case study research is that it is impossible to generalise from a single case (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The goal of case study research, however, is not to generalise statistically and not to enumerate frequencies. Rather, a case study aims to provide a detailed investigation and analysis of a complex issue (Eisenhardt, 1989; George & Bennett, 2005; Yin, 2009). The concept of knowledge and the meaning of knowledge management require a detailed consideration of context, which is a strength of case study research and can be difficult to achieve in quantitative studies. In particular, the organisational culture largely impacts upon knowledge management and knowledge practices. My ethnographic approach to the study was thus well suited to understand this culture from within.

In regards to the interviews, I was bound to the things that participants told me. They only said as much or as little as they liked. The ‘positive’ stories my participants told of the festival could have been shaped by the research relationship. Furthermore, the festival season was an extremely busy time for everybody involved. Some festival members felt that participating in an interview was an extra burden and did not find enough time during the actual festival. Similarly, at times I was quite busy myself and could only focus on observations rather than interviews. However, this exactly *was* one of the issues I was dealing with, and gave me a chance to critically reflect on it.

In regards to gender-related issues, Isakovic (2011) summarised the arts management literature by highlighting how co-leadership in the arts is usually portrayed as being undertaken by a female CEO and a male artistic director, mainly because the skills required in each position are different and the CEO carries out more “feminine” activities such as “listening, collaborating, as well as organizing and managing” (p. 489). In a case study research with the Belgrade Music Festival, however, Isakovic found and concluded that gender did not matter but rather “intentions, knowledge, goodwill and wish to make a better world, conditions that have nothing to do with gender at all” (p. 495). Similarly, within QMF I did not notice any gender discrepancies, neither in regards to the executive and artistic directors’ work practices, nor any of the team members. Moreover, coming in as a female researcher, I was treated similarly by both male and female staff members and did not observe any differences in regards to communicating with them. Both male and female festival members’ work practices were built upon mutual respect and collaboration and their performance of knowledge practices was thus not gendered. Hence, I did not further analyse potential gender-related issues within QMF.

### *3.7 Summary*

In this chapter I have described the methodological background of my study and explained the methods of data collection that I used. I have explained the different stages of analysis and how these were carried out. I have also emphasised the importance of reflexivity. In terms of validity and reliability, I have argued that the term crystallisation is more appropriate than triangulation in qualitative post-structuralist research (Richardson, 2000). I have also provided descriptions of my field research process throughout, several key events and personal experiences and how they shaped my understanding of QMF and my research experience. The research journey turned out to be different to what I initially expected and I acknowledged how my research focus changed from being problem-oriented to highlighting the strengths of QMF and applying an Appreciative Inquiry approach in

my reflection and analysis. The supervision relationship was crucial throughout this process in regards to engaging in critical reflection as well as refining my research question.

I have argued that my reflexive ethnographic approach to this research was suitable for the examination of the meanings that festival members attribute to knowledge and knowledge management practices within QMF. Through the use of these methods, I aimed to understand relational knowledge management practices from an insider perspective and to make festival members' tacit knowledge explicit. I have thus responded to the call for more qualitative, ethnographic research in both festival management and knowledge management (Cummings, 2007; Duffy, et al., 2011; Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2012; Holloway, et al., 2010; Kalling & Styhre, 2003; Mackellar, 2013; Magalhaes, 1998).

## **Chapter Four: Appreciating Collaborative Knowledge Practices**

### ***4.1 Introduction***

In this and the following two chapters I present and integrate my findings and analysis of relational knowledge practices around three major themes: appreciating collaboration, interdisciplinary teamwork and co-creation. Following Orlikowski's (2002) conceptualisation of knowledge as a practice comprised of several activities that organisational members engage in to produce the practice, I highlight how knowledge was relationally created and shared within QMF. The activities and practices were mainly tacit and taken for granted. At the time of the research QMF did not have a specific knowledge management policy or program, yet festival members were able to successfully collaborate through engaging in organisational knowledge practices.

Within each theme I therefore aim to make visible the taken for granted knowledge practices that were crucial to the success of QMF. In the last section of each chapter, I draw upon an Appreciative Inquiry approach to emphasise how particular knowledge practices contributed to organisational learning (Michael, 2005; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). I draw upon data from interview transcripts, my observations of informal conversations and my own experiences in order to identify key knowledge practices that were produced through the QMF culture and structure. In this chapter, I explore knowledge practices in a broader context to demonstrate how a shared identity and an understanding among the team of 'who they are' and what QMF aimed to achieve was the basis for QMF's effective knowledge management. In Chapters 5 and 6 I build on this analysis to examine how knowledge practices were enacted and embodied through internal organisational relations as well as in external relationship with communities.



Appreciating collaboration within relational knowledge practices forms the central focus of this chapter. Collaboration is therein regarded as crucial for gaining 'know how' that enabled festival members to contribute to QMF's vision and know 'how to' work within QMF's culture. The chapter therefore makes visible two practices supporting knowledge management within QMF: the creation and appreciation of a shared festival identity and the creation of rituals for knowledge sharing. Ethnographic writing offers insight into the culture and identity of the group or organisation being researched and thus illustrates the group's values and beliefs (Creswell, 2013). In this chapter I examine the importance of QMF's community cultural development ethos in relation to the values of festival members. Albert and Whetten (2004, p. 93) maintained that, "[t]he dimensions selected to define an organization's distinctive identity may be quite eclectic, embracing statements of ideology, management philosophy, culture, ritual, etc." The QMF vision, culture and formal as well as informal rituals importantly shaped the construction of QMF's identity.

Ashforth et al. (2008) further maintained that identity is relational and is constituted through organisational members' ways of identifying with the organisation. By stating that 'I am a member of the organisation and it is important to me', people feel positively about their membership and are emotionally invested in being part of the organisation. Within QMF, sharing a community cultural development ethos contributed to staff members' 'know how' of embodying QMF's values and beliefs. My interviews and observations revealed how QMF members largely identified positively with the festival and felt proud to be contributing to performances that emphasised community empowerment and development. In turn, identification with the organisation helped employees articulate their values, goals, beliefs, as well as knowledge, skills and abilities that shaped their behaviours and practices within the organisation (Ashforth, et al., 2008). The relational concept of organisational identity is useful for situating an understanding of knowledge practices that are central to why people join a certain organisation, how they approach their work and how and why they interact with each other in performing their work. The QMF organisation faced the challenge of presenting various projects with communities in different shapes and

sizes that needed to come together under a larger QMF identity. Knowing ‘how to’ embody QMF key values in day-to-day practices was central to the performance of the organisation’s community cultural development identity.

I will examine how not only permanent QMF staff members, but also seasonal staff and volunteers, were motivated by what the festival organisation aimed to achieve, particularly with their specific community cultural development projects. Being part of community projects was an important reason for staff members to work for QMF. I have therefore identified that QMF’s identity was constituted through knowledge practices that embodied a shared community cultural development ethos. Sharing the core values and beliefs of QMF means that organisational members identified with the specific festival principles and practices of working *with* and empowering communities to co-create performances. These principles have developed over time and space to significantly shape the organisation’s identity and vision. In turn, practices I have identified also constituted the ‘know how’ that enabled festival members to contribute to QMF’s vision and community cultural development ethos. In this sense, there was an ongoing relation between the formation of the QMF identity and the way knowledge was continuously practised.

The second practice that I call appreciating collaboration was centred on the creation of rituals for knowledge sharing within QMF. Both formal and informal rituals and interactions within an organisation provide opportunities for knowledge creation and transfer among members of the team through communication and the exchange of stories and experiences (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). It is widely argued in the literature that open communication enhances knowledge management within an organisation, whereas a culture of secrecy can negatively impact upon knowledge sharing behaviour and lead to knowledge hoarding (e.g., Boone, 2001; Deetz, 1995; J. Hall & Sapsed, 2005; Kelly, 2000; Michailova & Sidorova, 2011). In festival and event organisations, however, it can be challenging to communicate effectively due to the temporal nature of events and the stressful work environment (Larson, 2011; Van der Wagen, 2007). Providing opportunities for

formal as well as informal knowledge exchange through rituals was a crucial, yet taken for granted activity within QMF. The practice of communicating and sharing knowledge through formal and informal rituals in turn constituted the ‘know how’ that informed collaborative work within QMF’s culture. I have identified four formal rituals within QMF—the launch event, staff party, staff meetings and team meetings—as well as the informal rituals of sharing lunch and engaging in hallway talk, and will use these examples to demonstrate relational knowledge practices within each ritual.

The following table, adapted from Orlikowski (2002, p. 257) provides an outline of the chapter. The table summarises the practices and activities of collaboration as well as the knowing constituted within each practice.

<b>Practice</b>	<b>Activities comprising the practice (Tacit Knowledge)</b>	<b>Knowing Constituted in the Practice</b>
Creating a festival identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sharing a community cultural development ethos</li> <li>• Identifying with the festival principles</li> </ul>	Knowing how to contribute to QMF’s vision
Creating rituals for knowledge sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creating formal rituals</li> <li>• Creating informal rituals</li> </ul>	Knowing how to work within QMF’s collaborative culture

Table 3: Practices, activities and knowing within QMF’s collaborative culture (adapted from Orlikowski, 2002, p. 257)

Sharing stories of positive experiences within each practice as well as stories of organisational members themselves and of their organisational identity provides a common ground for organisational learning based on an Appreciative Inquiry approach (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Whitney, et al., 2010). In the final section of this chapter I analyse how the ‘know how’ constituted within each identified practice contributed to organisational learning for QMF as a whole. In making the practices visible and critically reflecting on them I contribute to QMF becoming explicit about

maintaining the festival identity as well as collaborative culture over the course of the festival life cycle.

#### *4.2 Creating a Festival Identity*

The practice of creating a festival identity within QMF informed staff members' 'know how' in terms of their contribution to QMF's vision and aims. QMF was quite different from other festivals in terms of 'who they are' as an organisation, how they work and what they aim to achieve. The festival identity was centred on collaboration, working together effectively and sharing the beliefs and values within a community cultural development ethos. Addleson (2012, p. 8) argued that, "[p]eople 'share knowledge' best when they work at creating a context of shared meanings for one another in their conversations." Hence, a shared understanding of identity ('who are we') provides the basis for effective collaboration. In festival organisations, on the one hand, it can be difficult to create and maintain a shared identity due to their temporal, pulsating nature. Without such shared festival identity there is no common ground for knowledge to be effectively practised. On the other hand, every festival organisation has a history beyond each festival season and therefore an established identity that exists over time.

QMF staff members knew that the organisation did not aim to attract large audiences and high volume ticket sales, but rather emphasised long-term collaboration with regional communities through which the communities themselves came to create the show. This shared festival identity has evolved over time and in response to certain changes in the vision and the community engagement and development principles over the last years. I will describe these changes below and highlight how sharing a community cultural development ethos contributed to staff members' 'know how' that embodied QMF's values and beliefs. I then move on to examine staff members' identification with QMF's principles, where I describe several practices of enacting the QMF identity at an individual as well as organisational level. The QMF identity

was also constructed for external audiences through their vision, logo and press releases. The identity and image of an organisation are always in a dynamic relationship (Gioia, et al., 2000), as I will demonstrate below. Both knowledge practices—sharing a community cultural development ethos and identifying with the festival principles—were crucial for staff members’ understanding of ‘how to’ collaborate and contribute to QMF’s vision.

#### *4.2.1 Sharing a Community Cultural Development Ethos*

The interactive and narrative activities of sharing a community cultural development ethos within QMF formed a crucial part of the practice of creating a common festival identity. The QMF identity was narrated in oral and written form and both formally as well as informally. Staff members thus learned ‘how to’ embrace and embody the community cultural development values through exchanging stories about QMF’s history and recent changes in relationships with communities as well as through the festival vision and identity of being a transformative festival. Regarding knowledge management as a storied and embodied practice hence emphasises the relational concept of organisational identity as central to why staff members joined QMF and how they engaged in their work practices.

The contemporary QMF festival context is shaped by the history of the organisation and its corporate memory. There were several recurring narratives about what QMF used to be and how it was managed that were frequently communicated among the team. Based on this understanding, the staff have learned how to speak of and interpret QMF’s values and principles. The stories were an important part of managing the organisational knowledge and of sharing those insights with new staff members in order to ensure a shared organisational identity (Gioia, et al., 2000; Kalling & Styhre, 2003; Thomas, et al., 2001). Lewis (2011, p. 505) argued that, “[i]t is through genuine repetition, storytelling, that humans narrate ways of knowing and being.” Stories therefore also helped staff members interpret the context of their particular job within the festival organisation and how they embodied the festival values.

Overall, the focus of QMF had changed during the last couple of years, which was mainly due to a change in artistic directors. Every artistic director brings their personal ideas and vision to the festival (Terracini, 2007) and with a change in artistic directors in 2008, there also was a change in the overall vision of QMF. Some staff members had been around long enough to experience such a change (in 2006 and 2008<sup>4</sup>); others came on board only afterwards. However, the stories of how QMF has changed over time worked as processes through which the QMF history was narrated. They were formally and informally shared with newcomers and seasonal staff members. QMF therefore not only used more conventional ways of transferring knowledge through manuals or checklists in training their staff, but also informal processes of sharing stories and narratives among the team in order to build a common ground for knowledge to be practiced.

Not only changes in artistic directors but also changing relationships with communities, such as the level of community engagement, capacity and community expectations have shaped the identity of QMF. One core staff member gave a detailed picture of these changes:

We've already done some community work in the past, and I can't speak with too much authority because I wasn't here, but I can say, which is possibly a reflection on the previous people who ran the festival, that in my first year, we ran into quite a lot of hostility with councils as we went around the country putting on shows. And some people were just accepting, they were doing the show... and some people we really had to talk around them. (...) so I think there was community engagement, but I don't think it was at the level we do it now, where we go into the community and we bring out members of the community

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<sup>4</sup> The festival was previously led by Artistic Director Simone de Haan in 1999, and then from 2001 to 2005 by Lyndon Terracini, who was the first to establish large-scale community projects in regional areas. Jazz pianist, composer and conductor Paul Grabowsky programmed the 2007 Festival (which was then re-named the Queensland Music Festival), followed by Deborah Conway in 2009 and 2011. James Morrison was then appointed as new director for the 2013 and 2015 festivals (QMF, 2011). It is likely that this recent change in artistic directors has led to further amendments in how the organisation is now managed. However, this only happened after my time with QMF and therefore does not form part of my analysis.

and work WITH them. And now we don't just take money off the councils, we put responsibility back on to the councils. So we are doing the show, "this is your responsibility and this is ours and we both put on the show." So it's not just the QMF. And I think they feel happy about that, they feel a sense of ownership. And ownership is really important in this business. And so that has helped us. (interview, 09/06/11)

The focus of the festival has shifted from a festival that 'does things' in the communities, to a festival that establishes long-term projects with councils and communities and works together 'with them' to create a sense of ownership. In turn, these changes have constituted the festival identity and sense of 'what QMF is' and aims to achieve. For the 2011 season QMF did not simply work with one single community, but rather with many different communities all over the state of Queensland. The communities differed in shapes, sizes and interests, such as different Indigenous communities or the community of drag queens. However, QMF aimed to work with each of these communities for an extended period of time, engage with them and tell their different stories through music. In order to collaborate and achieve an honest representation of their stories, the level of community engagement within the festival has hence changed significantly over the last few years. The community cultural development ethos of the organisation has shaped how knowledge was constructed and practised within QMF as well as with different communities. In turn, for festival members—both new and experienced—understanding the QMF community cultural development ethos was crucial in order to know 'how to' contribute to its vision and goals.

The Queensland Music Festival vision is (QMF, 2011):

*To transform lives through unforgettable musical experiences*

The QMF vision of being an 'empowering' and 'transformative' festival has become the dominant narrative within the organisation, the lens through which all decisions and actions were viewed. The vision therefore described a shared meaning (Kelly,

2000) of what QMF is as well as “the organization’s central characteristics as a guide for what they should do and how other institutions should relate to them” (Albert & Whetten, 2004, p. 92). Furthermore, the vision provided the foundation for a shared understanding among the festival staff and board members, sponsors, partners, councils, artists and community members of QMF being a festival with a strong community cultural development focus. I will further elaborate on how festival members engaged in community cultural development practices in Chapter 6.

Not only was a shared vision important for festival members to identify with QMF and to create a common identity, but also for creating an external image of what QMF is. QMF frequently used its vision for external communication, such as in press releases and newsletters. Communicating its aspirations not only at the festival office in Brisbane, but with people involved with the festival across the state, created a shared language (Hecker, 2012; Orlikowski, 2002; Renzl, 2007) that reinforced the importance of what QMF does, as well as a shared context for knowledge to be created and transferred. Furthermore, Hatch and Schultz (2002, p. 1001) argued that “explicit claims about what the organization is (...) carry with them some of the cultural meaning in which they are embedded.” The following examples illustrate how the organisation constructed its vision:

Queensland Music Festival is a biennial celebration of musical excellence. Working with communities throughout the state, QMF has a vision to transform lives through unforgettable musical experience. From 15-31 July, the best of local, national and international talent will perform every conceivable style of music to Queenslanders in Brisbane and in 33 regional and remote centres. (press release, 31/05/11)

No matter what your musical inclinations or where you will be in the state this July, QMF will engage you with music in its many shapes and forms. Live music is uplifting and inspiring, its language transcends boundaries. QMF is a great time to get out there and take some risks, and to experience live music like you have never heard it before. (2011 festival brochure, p. 3)

In a state where distances and small population centres often make touring or even securing specialist teachers an extreme challenge, the ability to use the



festival as a vehicle for developing local skills, stories and cultural activity is especially important. Having the opportunity to work with local communities and develop projects that leave a legacy of skills and knowledge is one of the great privileges of working with the Queensland Music Festival. (newsletter, 08/08/11)

The above statements about what the festival promised to evoke were shaped by the vision of the organisation, and shaped the organisational identity and its community development focus in return. Not only was the vision emphasised in these texts, but also how the festival organisation aimed to achieve its goal. The broad scale of events was expressed (local, national and international artists and a variety of musical styles) as well as the geographic reach of the festival. Relationships with regional communities and collaborative development were emphasised to define not only ‘who we are’ as a festival but also ‘why these values are important to QMF’ and ‘how we as QMF members generally do things in order to achieve our goals’ (cf. Ashforth, et al., 2008). The vision and shared narrative of what QMF is therefore exemplifies the essence of the festival that distinguishes it from other more commercial festivals and demonstrates a certain degree of continuity over time despite changes in its community arts focus in recent times. It is these three characteristics—the essence of the organisation, what distinguishes the organisation from other organisations and continuity over time—that together constructed the organisational identity (Albert & Whetten, 2004; Deal & Kennedy, 1982) within which organisational knowledge was practised and shared.

The ways in which organisational members came to know ‘how to’ perform their roles within the organisation affected, and were affected, by their shared understanding of ‘who they are’ as an organisation (Nag, et al., 2007; Orlikowski, 2002). Furthermore, the collective sense of identity contributed to their understanding of ‘how to’ effectively work together and collaborate. In turn, through embodying and engaging in the practice of sharing QMF’s community cultural development ethos, festival members came to know ‘how to’ contribute to the festival vision and long-term success. I have demonstrated how understanding knowledge not as documented

and explicit information but rather as “created and re-produced within powerful historical, embodied, emotional and social relations” (Küpers, 2005, p. 118) highlights how staff members tacitly came to understand the festival context in which to perform their roles. I will further elaborate on festival members’ work practices in the next section, not only describing their shared organisational identity in terms of ‘who they are’, but also in terms of ‘what they do’ in order to identify with the QMF principles and values, as well as how they reflexively understood their self-identities (Giddens, 1991) in relation to the QMF context.

#### *4.2.2 Identifying with the Festival Principles*

Staff alignment and identification with the values of QMF was crucial in terms of creating a shared understanding and culture that enabled people to embrace an identity and common vision of the organisation. Ashforth and Mael (2004, p. 153-154) argued that, “[i]dentification is the perception of oneness with or belongingness to a group, involving direct or vicarious experience of its success and failures.” Staff members’ identification with the festival principles therefore formed an important activity in regards to creating a shared festival identity, as well as for staff members to gain ‘know how’ that informed contributing to QMF’s vision and aims. It could be dangerous for the organisation if staff members did not embrace the key values and beliefs but rather applied their knowledge previously gained from working at other festivals which merely aimed for large audiences and ticket sales. If festival members do not identify with the organisation identity, their common ground for knowledge to be practised is lost (Eisenberg, Goodall Jr., & Trethewey, 2010; Nag, et al., 2007). I will describe below how staff members on an individual level were passionate about what QMF does and why they chose to work for the organisation. I will then move on to the organisational level highlighting one particular story that was shared internally and demonstrates the organisation identity in everyday practice, as well as an example of how it was communicated externally.

In the interviews I was struck by how often participants emphasised the importance of what the festival does and why they were so passionate about it. Many staff

members—both permanent and seasonal, as well as contracted members of the creative teams working with communities—chose to work for QMF because of its philosophy and its focus on community engagement and development. The strong alignment of individual identities with the festival identity was apparent. A member of the staff, for example, told me that when he first applied for the job, he realised that *“it seemed to me like a really good thing to be involved with, because it’s not just art for art’s sake. It’s (...) touching people’s lives, I think”* (interview, 05/08/11). Another staff member, Vicky, joined the team in January 2011; she therefore experienced her first festival season with QMF. Before the festival even started, she told me:

QMF is such a beautiful festival, definitely one of my favourites so far. You know, you are working with communities and ... of all types. And it’s just amazing, you know. You know, we don’t just buy in shows, like (...) Festival does. It’s more than that! (...) For me, and the reason why I do this and why I am in this industry and in marketing, is because I love what I do. And for me, when I see people who have been moved by music or the arts in some way, that for me, is my reward! Oh, it’s just kind of ... for me, that’s everything! (interview, 02/06/11)

Vicky emphasised how QMF did not simply ‘buy in shows’ and present them in the regional communities, but rather worked with regional councils and communities to create a project together. Through this engagement process, they embodied the festival identity and their vision of ‘transforming lives through unforgettable musical experiences’. Interestingly, Vicky was also affected by this vision and transformative power of the festival as it also transformed her life. Vicky’s festival work can therefore be regarded as a “reflexive project,” which Giddens (1991, p. 75) explained as continuously reflecting on, “[w]e are, not what we are, but what we make of ourselves.” Other staff members mentioned similar reasons for applying to work for QMF in their interviews. QMF provided the context for them to act authentically and be true to themselves and their values. They were emotionally engaged in and affected by the work QMF does and wanted to be involved in these life-transforming projects in the communities. Furthermore, they found it more exciting to be involved in long-term projects, in creating the project with the communities from start to finish, rather than merely delivering an event. QMF is unique in that regard and most staff

members were required to switch from a short-term focused festival management strategy which they practised with other festival organisations, to QMF's long-term community development strategy.

The desire that staff felt in working for QMF, however, led to a high level of identity investment in everyday practices, as well as a strong sense of belonging and emotional attachment to the organisation, which was also noticed by festival members outside the core group: *“You know, so the management puts an enormous amount of energy into this festival, it's just about to pop out in the end. So they're obviously very proud and very attached to this”* (interview, 22/06/11). Staff members' identity investment and identification with the organisation in turn can increase not only organisational effectiveness, but also teamwork, productivity and innovation (Ashforth, et al., 2008; Cherniss, 2001; Marsick, Volpe, & Watkins, 1999). For QMF the connection between the organisational identity and vision with staff identities was an important knowledge practice which shaped staff member's 'know how' in terms of contributing to QMF's vision. I will further elaborate on QMF's practice of recruiting staff members who embraced the festival identity and vision in Chapter 5.

Like a staff member I too was intrinsically motivated to be part of QMF and started to identify with the festival after only a few weeks. The feeling led to high commitment to my work at the festival organisation as well as my research and made the festival experience very enjoyable, despite the stress and high workload. I was engaged in emotional labour during the stressful time of the festival, yet I cared about QMF like a staff member. Positively charged words and reflections about what QMF is and how I felt about being part of it clearly dominated my field notes and experience.

Today I think about my overall festival experience for the first time ... I have to say, that even though it was hard work and a challenge to get up every morning, go to the festival office, work all day, go to the performances at night and write up my field notes in the middle of the night, I really enjoyed it. (...) Now that I know what QMF is about I have come to understand the importance of their

community projects and I love being part of it. I suppose this feeling has influenced my research experience a lot (field notes, 03/08/11).

Identifying with the festival was incredibly important for me, as through the process of becoming part of the organisation and identifying with their principles and values I was able to define my researcher identity (Schein, 2004). It also allowed me to become an insider to the organisation under study as well as understand day-to-day practices as ‘one of them’. Becoming the researcher meant, on the one hand, taking on the label ‘researcher’, on the other hand, giving it specific meaning through engagement in certain practices (Wenger, 1998), such as taking field notes and interviewing festival members. My researcher identity was shaped by those practices; however, most of the practices would not have been possible without a certain sense of belonging to and identification with the festival organisation. In terms of knowledge management I experienced firsthand that identification with the organisation was crucial, as it not only enhanced the willingness to share knowledge (Jo & Joo, 2011) but also my understanding and ‘know how’ in regards to contributing to QMF’s vision through my research. Being an insider was crucial, yet at the same time I needed to step back to see the tacit understanding which I had acquired along this process. The complexity of being both an insider and outsider was challenging at times while in the field.

At the organisational level, one particular example of how the festival team talked indirectly about the festival identity was when I asked my interview participants about highlights of previous QMF festivals. Most of them gave me an example of one of the community projects that fitted very well with who they are as an organisation and what QMF is trying to achieve. A story that was told a lot of times is that of the *Hidden Republic* performance on Thursday Island in 2009 which was broadcast live to the centre of Brisbane. According to my participants, the performance was special because the Queensland Youth Orchestra was playing with the local community on Thursday Island and a lot of their parents watched the performance on the screen in Brisbane and could thus see how music helped their children ‘transform lives’. One of my participants recounted:

That experience for me has kind of embodied what the festival is about. And I think that's something, if you spoke to most of the board members who were around and most of the staff that were around, they would probably give you a similar view. Because that's something we've talked about a lot.

*RS: And you said it fits with the festival vision?!*

Absolutely! Absolutely! And I think that's why it ticked all the boxes.  
(interview, 22/06/11)

The story about the *Hidden Republic* event highlights 'what the festival is about' and it was shared internally with new staff members as well as new board members. Not surprisingly, therefore, I also heard the story several times both in formal interviews as well as in informal conversations with different festival members. Through sharing the story, newcomers learned what QMF is about and what the festival organisation aims to achieve, which is the common ground for knowledge to be effectively and efficiently practised within the organisation. Communicating this and similar stories of success verbally as well as through e-mails is also an important practice in Appreciative Inquiry and Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Kelly (2000, p. 98) further maintained that "the process of communicating vision with stories provides salient and memorable information about shared values." Regarding knowledge management as a storied practice, telling and re-telling the story therefore enhanced a shared understanding among staff and other festival members which was fundamental for effectively practising knowledge management. Story-telling forms an important informal knowledge practice that needs to be acknowledged in festival organisations beyond the more traditional knowledge management processes. A shared story capturing the essence of what QMF is—its organisational identity (Nag, et al., 2007)—was important for staff members to come to identify with the festival principles. This and other organisational narratives further play an important role in the construction and experience of certain emotions in relation to staff members' work and performance (Lupton, 1998); they have become 'their' shared stories. Narratives thus provided an emotional connection for staff members with the organisation.

Internally the ‘know how’ of contributing to QMF’s vision was thus practised through the transfer of experiences and stories about what QMF does and what it aims to achieve. Staff members, however, also engaged in practices of sharing the QMF identity and image with outsiders and audiences. For example, during the 2011 festival they often used social media, particularly Twitter and Facebook, to help further enhance the message of what QMF aims to achieve more broadly. During the festival launch event, for instance, staff members tweeted about how the festival program was presented to the general public for the first time. Particularly statements about what the festival promises to be were tweeted about, such as:

@QMF. Behind The Cane. Community project in Bowen. This gig will be massive. The story, the talent, the music. (launch tweets, 31/05/11)

I chose this example because it not only demonstrates how language was used among the staff to describe the aim and scope of QMF to the general public but also the shared meaning that was created. The tweet about the community project in Bowen illustrates how the vision of the festival and its identity was casually expressed in just a few words. The title of the project was emphasised, followed by a brief explanation of what it is and where. In simply saying that it was going to be ‘massive’, the size and breadth of this particular project was then highlighted. Finally, the short description of why the project was so important to QMF tells yet more about how the QMF embodied its vision in the community projects. The festival aimed to transform lives through ‘the story’ (and leaving a legacy among the community), ‘the talent’ (developing local skills and knowledge), as well as ‘the music’ (live music that transcends boundaries). By constructing the QMF image in the social media, the festival organisation hoped to transform a formal vision statement into everyday understanding among the audience. The language used constructed meaning about the festival identity and image of ‘who they are as an organisation’. Staff members’ ‘know how’ of communicating and sharing QMF’s vision with the general public formed a crucial part of creating this festival identity.

In this section I have made visible the practice of creating a shared QMF festival identity. I have described the two activities of sharing a community cultural development ethos and identifying with the festival principles and made explicit how relational practices of knowing ‘how to’ contribute to QMF’s vision were constructed through a shared and embodied festival identity. The QMF festival identity shaped meaning-making and relational knowledge practices in return, as I will further highlight below as well as in Chapters 5 and 6.

### *4.3 Creating Rituals for Knowledge Sharing*

The second practice for effective collaboration and knowing ‘how to’ work within QMF’s culture can be described in terms of the process of creating rituals for knowledge sharing. Rituals not only “(...) reflect and reinforce belief systems” (Samier, 1997, p. 419), but they also reveal some of the taken for granted and tacit elements of an organisation’s identity and culture (Islam & Zyphur, 2009; Schein, 2004; A. C. T. Smith & Stewart, 2011). Therefore, rituals can be regarded as sense-making events through which organisational members come to identify with and commit to the organisation (Islam & Zyphur, 2009). Through rituals knowledge is exchanged and shared as well as emotions are evoked (A. C. T. Smith & Stewart, 2011). In turn by sharing rituals, staff members learn ‘how to’ contribute to the organisation’s goals and ‘how to’ collaborate. In any organisation both formal as well as informal rituals exist ranging from “(...) ‘full’ or complete rituals to ‘ritual-like’ activities” (A. C. T. Smith & Stewart, 2011, p. 114). In formal meetings, for example, information and knowledge about ‘what’ needs to be done is shared. Informal rituals on the other hand can provide an opportunity for staff members to exchange further information and therefore enhance their understanding of ‘how’ these tasks will be performed and achieved. Rituals are thus crucial for the transfer of both explicit and tacit knowledge (Armistead & Meakins, 2002). They also constitute staff members’ identification with the organisation as well as their ‘know how’ of effectively collaborating and working together within the organisational culture.



In this section I will describe formal and informal rituals within QMF and how these contributed to staff members' identification with the organisation as well as their 'know how' in regards to collaboration. The formal rituals include the program launch event, staff party, staff meetings and team meetings, each demonstrating different knowledge practices. The informal ritual of having lunch together as well as ritual-like activities around this practice will be described in the second part, highlighting the informal exchange of information and transfer of both explicit and tacit knowledge. Through making visible as an ethnographer the rituals and taken for granted practices which are not commonly regarded as a knowledge management practice in festival and event organisations, I aim to contribute to QMF staff members' reflection on their formal and informal ways of sharing knowledge.

#### *4.3.1 Formal Rituals*

Formal rituals are part of any organisation; they not only convey shared meaning about what the organisation is and aims to achieve but also provide a platform for knowledge to be created and shared (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005). In formal rituals, such as staff meetings, team meetings, annual celebrations or others, members of the organisation embody, share and reinforce the organisation's values and culture (Eisenberg, et al., 2010). At the same time rituals emphasise staff members' 'know how' of contributing to the organisation and sharing its identity. Formal rituals therefore provide opportunities for knowledge to be practised and shared both internally as well as with the general public such as in ceremonies (Rowlinson, Booth, Clark, Delahaye, & Procter, 2010).

In this section I describe four formal rituals within QMF: the program launch event, staff party, staff meetings and team meetings. I have chosen these four rituals because they demonstrate different ways in which knowledge was practised. The program launch event and the staff party highlight one-off rituals that produced QMF's identity and image and show how staff members came to embrace this festival identity. It also illustrates how in my ethnographer role I came to understand and know 'how to' identify with the festival. The staff meetings, on the other hand, are an example of a

formal knowledge exchange ritual taking place regularly through which staff members learned ‘how to’ work within QMF’s collaborative culture. Finally, the team meetings demonstrate staff members’ ‘know how’ of effective collaboration within their teams that enabled the creation and transfer of both explicit and tacit knowledge.

The program launch event and the staff party marked the beginning and end of the official festival season and they were two events that demonstrated festival members’ identification with the organisation. The program launch took place on 31 May 2011 and was an opportunity for QMF to showcase its festival identity and image. The event took place at the Judith Wright Centre in Brisbane, across the street from the festival headquarters. On the day I arrived earlier than usual at the festival office as I wanted to attend both the final dress rehearsal and the official launch event later that day as well as spend some time at the office to see how the team worked together on this stressful yet exciting day. I immediately felt the excitement among the team: *The atmosphere is sensational today. Everybody is excited, running around with a smile on their face, talking about what’s coming up and, above all, trying on T-shirts. They have finally arrived and Anne has arranged them at the desk for everyone to pick up (field notes, 31/05/11).*

Wearing those QMF T-shirts for the first time meant we showed our identification with the festival (Pratt & Rafaeli, 2004). We later took a team photo wearing these T-shirts which further enhanced a feeling of belonging to and identifying with QMF. In my role as an ethnographic researcher, it was very important for me to become part of the team and to belong. I felt proud to be in that photo and thus felt like ‘one of them’. Reflecting on my experience I can say that more or less from this day I started using ‘we’ instead of ‘they’ in my field notes and thus associated myself with the team. I started sharing the QMF identity and felt that I “belong[ed] to the same unit, with the same interests and objectives” (Alvesson, 1996, p. 81). Becoming an insider, however, also meant that it became difficult for me to maintain a critical awareness and perspective on certain practices and issues. At times, I needed to remind myself to step back and reflect on what had happened and why.

The program launch event not only was a public celebration of what QMF does and what the festival aims to achieve but also an opportunity for the staff to bond and come to identify with the organisation. I already felt like a festival member after this launch event; however, it was not until the staff closing party that I realised how close I had in fact become to the team and how much I identified with the festival. The staff party took place on the last day of the festival, 31 July 2011, at a bar in Brisbane. Even though it was an informal gathering to celebrate the team's achievements, the party can be described as a formal ritual of closure. It was through formal speeches that everyone was acknowledged and the festival success was celebrated. Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 72) maintained that, "[s]trong culture companies create a great deal of hoopla when someone does well and exemplifies the values the company seeks to preserve." Through the staff party, QMF's identity was therefore fostered and staff members' achievements were celebrated:

After some chitchat and small talk, it is time for the speeches: (...) He jumps on stage and gives a quite long speech, thanks everybody for their great work and also the board [of directors] for their support. He even acknowledges my hard work in front of everyone, which makes me feel very special. It is such a great feeling to be treated like a team member! It's been a long process, but I have managed to become a team member over the last couple of months. Tonight a lot of them come over, talk to me, and thank me for all the small jobs I helped out with. (...)

We all hug and say good-bye even though we will see each other again at the office tomorrow. Everyone gives me a big hug, even the people with who I haven't been that close. As I leave the crowd behind, I feel like I have made some really good friends. We have had a great time together, it was an intense time and we have been through a lot of hard work, but that has brought us together. As Sarah said in her speech, for her it's like a 'family away from her family'. Yes, that's exactly how I feel too. (field notes, 31/08/11)

The staff party at the end of the festival season was a formal ritual through which QMF's identity of being a collaborative and empowering festival was celebrated.

Staff members' hard work was acknowledged and their 'know how' of identifying with QMF and embracing its vision was made explicit through acknowledging each person's role within the festival and the community projects. Both the program launch event and the staff party hence created meaning about QMF's culture and identity as well as the team's shared festival experience (Sharpe, 2005a; A. C. T. Smith & Stewart, 2011; Trice & Beyer, 1984). Both events contributed to staff members' feeling of belonging to a 'family' and therefore their emotional attachment to the festival. For me too, belonging to the 'QMF family' was important particularly being far away from home. I enjoyed being emotionally attached to a "*family away from my own family*" (field notes, 31/08/11).

In festival and event organisations more generally, the 'family' metaphor is often used not only in describing a group of participants or fans, but also for the staff and volunteers who share working together on the event experience (K. Smith & Lockstone, 2009; Van der Wagen, 2007); however, the importance of belonging to a 'family' has not yet been identified as a knowledge enabler within festival organisations. The term 'family' is thereby used in organisations to describe a certain culture that features a family ideology (Ram & Holliday, 1993). At QMF, thus, the 'family' metaphor was not used to describe a normative family, but rather a family by choice. The 'family' metaphor not only describes a sense of belonging but also terms such as "trust", "caring", "responsibility to each other", "continuation of community" and "commitment", among others (Lennon & Wollin, 2001, p. 418). These feelings and emotions, in turn, positively influence a collaborative culture, knowledge management and in particular knowledge sharing behaviour (Donate & Guadamillas, 2011; Hislop, 2003; Marsick, et al., 1999; Whitney, et al., 2010). Using the 'family' metaphor within the team was therefore an important part of creating and sharing the QMF identity and organisational culture. Celebrating this 'family' at the staff closing party further enhanced an emotional attachment among the staff which was crucial in terms of rehiring them for the next festival season.

After a description of two formal rituals celebrating the QMF identity, I now turn to a formal knowledge exchange ritual within QMF: the staff meetings. Alvesson and Sveningsson (2008) argued that in staff meetings a lot of the culture of an organisation plays out and can be observed in terms of the atmosphere, who contributes, who remains silent, and what topics are covered. Staff meetings were an important knowledge practice within the organisation in terms of both formal and informal transfer of knowledge as well as constituting staff members' 'know how' that enabled working within QMF's collaborative culture. They can be regarded as a ritual, as they were "frequently repeated, in a form largely laid down in advance" (Visser, 1991, p. 18). However, Visser further argued that, "[r]itual is process; it guides, but it also serves, and is guided. People do influence ritual—and they do so just because human rituals are not 'natural'. We made them, so we can adapt them to our present requirements" (p. 26). I therefore also paid attention to how the staff meetings at QMF changed as we moved closer to the festival season and everybody became very busy. Interestingly, about four weeks before the festival started no more staff meetings were held, and it took me a while to understand why as I will explain below. First, I focus on the ritual of getting everybody together for the meeting, the topics covered in the meetings and the seating order.

The QMF full staff meetings started in February 2011 and were held fortnightly on either Tuesday or Wednesday mornings, then weekly as we progressed closer to the festival. The entire team knew the schedule of the meetings and it was also forwarded to me. Everybody present at the office on the days of the meeting was expected to attend. Most of them had a reminder in their calendars, so usually about 10 minutes before the meeting started I could hear a lot of alarms going off on their computers. Then, about five minutes before the meeting, the receptionist or somebody else on the team would again remind everyone to gather in the board room so that they could start the meeting on time.

It's almost time for staff meeting. Peter calls out to everyone: "Guys, five minutes until staff meeting starts ...". As usual, everyone just keeps talking or working. Peter calls again after five minutes, but it takes another couple of minutes until they start moving. (field notes, 13/04/11)

Approaching the festival, it was sometimes emphasised that there would only be “*a quick one, as we know you’re all busy*” (field notes, 26/05/11). No matter how long or short the meetings were, the agenda was printed out for everyone, so staff members could take notes under each topic making it easier for me to take notes too. The suggested order of topics to be discussed was the same for every staff meeting: Artistic Director; Executive Director; Program Update; Technical Update; Marketing and Development Update; Finance and Administration; and Any other business. The order, however, was frequently mixed up during the meetings demonstrating more of an informal “give-and-take” (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 70) approach to the meetings rather than only one-way delivery. The executive director nevertheless always made sure that all topics were dealt with.

As the order of the topics to be covered shows, mainly the permanent staff was expected to take care of those updates and inform the entire team of what was going on within their specific teams. However, as part of the Program Update, for example, the different producers usually also got a chance to provide an update of what their particular pods were currently working on. Furthermore, quite often other team members were asked to provide details on specific issues or they simply jumped in when their particular task seemed important for everybody to be aware of. For example, as part of the Program Update, the ticketing and function coordinator sometimes provided information for everyone on ticket sales or allocations of VIP tickets, as this was her area of expertise rather than the program director’s. Even the more quiet staff members frequently contributed in the meeting, which demonstrates they were aware of the importance of sharing their insights, ideas and knowledge with everyone. The staff meetings therefore highlight how staff members came to know ‘how to’ work within QMF’s collaborative culture, where the democratic style encouraged everyone to contribute ideas. Whenever I had an important update for the team (for example, when I told them that I was going to start conducting interviews the following week), I mentioned that during the ‘Any other business’ section of the meeting, as my research did not fit into any of the other areas. Staff members were generally interested in my research updates and often asked questions for clarification.

They for example wanted to know specific details of how I would recruit interview participants or whether they were supposed to volunteer to participate.

The staff meetings also provided opportunities for complex issues to be discussed. Conflict between individual staff members or between pods and other teams was sometimes part of these discussions, yet needed to be resolved. For example, in one of the meetings there was disagreement between the marketing team and one of the pods working on a community project including workshops for local musicians in six different towns. This particular project was already quite complex and challenging for the team to manage, because the musicians had wanted to change the parameters of the workshops several times. The marketing team now wanted to have the musicians on television every morning to promote the project in the different locations. However, this would have required the musicians to travel from one town to the next after each show at night.

Steve points out that the musicians might not want to drive around after the concert. He argues that musicians tend to say “the best thing of a performance is the beer afterwards.” It would take them at least an hour to drive to the next location, and the producers would have to organise the hotel key for them when arriving late at night. There is a bit of a conflict arising between them as the logistical problems are discussed. They check the map to find out the exact distance between the towns, it turns out it’s about 1.5 hours each. On the one hand, Steve says it would be an extra burden for the musicians; on the other hand, Vicky points out that the musicians might like the idea of being on TV. After all, it would be great PR for them. Steve decides to ask Elisa, the managing producer for this particular project, for her opinion. She likes the idea but says she will need to check back with the musicians. (field notes, 08/02/11)

The complexity of the described issue became apparent as different staff members expressed their concerns. Some liked the idea, others were unsure about whether the musicians would be interested. Even after an intense 30-minute discussion, the issue could not be resolved at this stage; the team parted without having reached consensus and needed to wait for the producer to talk to the musicians. About a week later, the

pod responsible for this project and the marketing team met again and made a final decision not to have the musicians on television every morning, but rather to find another way of promoting the workshops. Conflict and disagreement were part of the staff meetings and demonstrated the complexity of QMF's program. Not every issue could be resolved during the meetings; however, constructive dialogue and discussion were encouraged and fostered.

Even though the meetings were formally constructed, informal discussions were sometimes part of the meetings providing an opportunity for staff members to not only share explicit but also tacit information and 'know how' about what needed to be done and how. According to Thatchenkery and Chowdhry (2007) and Wang (2006), informal exchanges of information can enhance relationships and trust between staff members and help them become comfortable to ask questions and provide input. In terms of knowledge management, the staff meetings were an opportunity for knowledge transfer to be practised among the team not only by providing a structure to the meetings in which everybody could share information and knowledge, but also through creating a comfortable and collaborative atmosphere within which staff members were willing to share their insights and ideas.

Interestingly, the seating order during the meetings somewhat resembled the agenda of the staff meetings, but staff members did not seem to be aware of their seating order. It was similar for every meeting as I realised one day:

I notice that they have the same seating order again. The executive director is always sitting at the far end of the table and the artistic director next to him, if she is there. Then the program director to their left and the technical manager to their right, followed by all the other producers and technical staff on each side in no particular order. Sometimes the different pods sit together, at other times they don't. Somewhere in the middle of the long side of the table is the finance and operations manager. And the marketing/development team sits at the other far end of the table. That's usually where I sit too. It is interesting. I don't think they



are aware of this or do it on purpose. I suppose it's just something they got used to. (field notes, 04/05/11)

Board rooms are a common setting for rituals such as meetings to be held as they create a formal setting (A. C. T. Smith & Stewart, 2011). Round tables, on the other hand, produce a more casual atmosphere where everyone can contribute easily (Deal & Kennedy, 1982). At QMF the meetings were held in the board room providing the necessary formality, yet the big, oval table in the board room enhanced the casual and friendly atmosphere during the staff meetings and broke down the hierarchy. Over time, the meetings grew shorter because everybody was busy, but the entire team was involved and engaged in the meetings. They all came prepared to share the key points of what was happening in their teams or with their projects. Only the most important updates were shared with everyone, and the excitement was growing week after week.

About four weeks before the festival started, the staff meetings stopped. There were no staff meetings held during the festival either, which was very surprising to me. I soon realised that from then on they had a lot of pod and team meetings rather than meetings for the entire staff, and it started to make sense to me that these team meetings became more important than the full staff meetings. At this point staff members already knew how to collaborate and thus shared information and knowledge more informally. Moreover, the team meetings then provided an opportunity to discuss the details of 'how' to do certain tasks rather than 'what' needs to be done more generally. It also shows how the pod structure empowered seasonal staff members to make their own decisions, an important practice within QMF as I will describe further in Chapter 5. The projects were clearly distributed among the teams, so there was no need any more to know everything else that was going on with other projects. Sharing everything with everyone would only lead to information overload, which can be dangerous, particularly when everybody is already busy (Cranwell-Ward & Abbey, 2005). In an interview after the festival, a staff member confirmed my observations:

Some things I think not everybody has to be on the same page for. Like, we have a pod structure for a reason. If you're doing *Drag Queen'sLand*, you don't need to know what's going on in Bowen really ... Like, what would be the point? A lot of festivals have these giant staff meetings, where everyone sits there and says what he's doing. But you don't have the time and you don't really want to know that a forklift is arriving in Bowen on Thursday, if you're doing *Drag Queen'sLand* in Brisbane. What's the point? (interview, 16/08/11)

The formal ritual of the staff meetings therefore stopped at a certain point; however, it demonstrated how the team learned 'how to' work together, the collaborative atmosphere and the formal as well as informal exchange of crucial information. In the staff meetings, therefore, the collaborative culture of the organisation and open communication were played out. The meetings provided the basis for a shared understanding of 'how to' work together and to encourage everybody's input and ideas.

The fourth formal ritual I will now describe are the team meetings. Team meetings were happening at different times and some teams were meeting more frequently and more formally than others. Moreover the composition of participants in these meetings changed from one meeting to the next. Sometimes there were pod meetings, at other times one pod would invite a member of the senior management team as well as a marketing team member to their meeting, at yet other times there were meetings held with contractors or artists. All these formal team meetings provided opportunities for knowledge to be created and shared, and for team members to come to know 'how to' work together and collaborate as well as know 'how to' perform their roles within the team. I will describe a risk assessment meeting below where the technical director met with a technical manager and a contractor to discuss the risks of each QMF project. The meeting represents how festival members exchanged explicit, as well as tacit knowledge, in meetings as well as how they worked together and collaborated. I present most of my field notes on this particular meeting below, as they are important to demonstrate the entire ritual. In italics I have added my interpretation of how these team members engaged in different processes and practices of knowledge transfer.

Today Mark has invited me to join him and the tech guys for the risk assessment meeting. I arrive at the office at 9:00 am and join Mark, Andy and an event security expert, Rob, in the meeting room. After brief introductions, we start the meeting. Mark explains that they have a generic risk assessment plan for the entire festival that covers all major issues that are relevant to all the projects. Then there will be an individual risk assessment for each individual project where certain aspects can be added. For example, the issue of fire on stage is only relevant for Bowen, not for any other project. So it does not have to be included in every single document. The documents are too long anyway and Mark says nobody wants to read extra information that is not relevant for their particular project. Furthermore, with some venues, there are existing documents, which QMF can just defer to. But that needs to be mentioned somewhere and clarified with the venues. So today's meeting is all about specifying the individual needs for the projects. *[Mark's brief introduction of what the meeting is about gives the team an idea of what needs to be discussed and what can be left out or dealt with individually.]*

Andy runs us through the projects he is responsible for. He has all the details about the venues, size, emergency exits, crowd control, etc. at hand. He is very well prepared as usual. *[Individual information and knowledge is now shared.]* Mark is in the meantime working on the overall document. The other two check back with him at times, as he is working on the big screen so we can all see the changes he makes. *[Simultaneously, some of the information is made explicit right on the spot. Therefore, not only is tacit knowledge converted into explicit knowledge, but this explicit knowledge is immediately shared between the three of them.]* Rob is very focused too; he asks tricky questions and wants to know all the details. They all are very knowledgeable about potential risks and issues. *[Even though all three of them are highly experienced, only together can they cover all the details and make sure everything is covered. Their roles are clearly distributed: Mark knows the broader scheme of how each individual project fits into the whole QMF program, Andy has detailed information about each project he is working on and Rob brings in an outsider yet highly experienced risk management perspective.]* (...) Rob looks at Mark and says, "your mind is racing, right? I can SEE you thinking!" Yes, Mark seems very focused. *[This casual statement makes everyone aware of how complex the issue really is.]*

(...) It is a long and tedious process. Each potential risk has to be named, evaluated in terms of likelihood that it occurs (low, medium, high) and if it occurs, the size of damage

(low, medium, high). That then gives an overall rating of how much risk is involved. For example, the likelihood of fire is low, but the damage would be high. So the overall risk is medium. Then, there also needs to be stated how QMF aims to avoid that risk, and in case something does occur, how QMF will deal with the issue. And finally, who is responsible. *[For each item on their list, the team goes through complex dialogue and discussion around all those questions before making a decision on each individual potential risk. They discuss 'what' needs to be done and 'how' they are going to achieve that.]*

(...) After a while, Rob mentions that he has also decided to put an overall risk rating on the very first page for each project. This will indicate the average potential risk for the project. He thinks that if it says "medium" or "high" on the front page, people are more likely to read the entire document. Mark likes the idea, so they decide to implement that too. It will even be marked green (low risk), orange (medium risk) or red (high risk), so that it really jumps at you. *[Another decision is made based in this case, on the individual experience and knowledge of one particular group member. The shared tacit knowledge will now be made explicit, which can then in turn be shared with everyone involved with the project.]*

(...) It is complicated, the three guys constantly struggle to find the right words to clearly express what they mean, go back and forth, discuss and explain. It has to be very specific, yet cover every potential risk within the specific categories. For example, within the stage category, there can be risks such as: trips, slips, falls; fire; power breakdown; and many more. Every single item has to be stated and evaluated, it takes forever! (...) *[The complexity of the meeting is apparent; data and information is put together and shared and collective meaning is created around it. The group is engaged in various forms of knowledge creation and transfer.]* I try to remember everything, but it's impossible. *[Not being a risk management expert makes it difficult for me to follow the discussion.]* At 12:30 pm Mark decides to take a break. He asks everyone to come back at 1:00 pm, then they will start with Tom's projects, followed by Nick's and finally Alex's. *[The ritual will continue with other technical managers until all projects have been covered.]* (field notes, 17/06/11)

The above example of a group meeting demonstrates how the team engaged in several processes and practices of knowledge creation and transfer during the meeting. They not only shared explicit information (such as in the staff meetings) but also the more tacit elements of ‘how to’ do these tasks. Face-to-face interaction in formal rituals such as the group meetings provided the foundation for sharing knowledge and information as well as for collaboration and knowing ‘how to’ work together. Moreover, in team meetings staff members practised and performed certain roles (Goffman, 1959) and together made decisions.

To summarise, the four formal rituals described in this section highlighted different ways of how knowledge was practised within QMF: the program launch event and the staff party demonstrated how through these rituals the festival identity was shared, therefore constituting staff members’ ‘know how’ of contributing to QMF’s vision and aims. The staff meetings on the other hand provided regular formal opportunities for knowledge to be created and shared as well as opportunities for learning ‘how to’ work within QMF’s collaborative culture. Challenges and difficulties also were discussed in the staff meetings, sometimes leading to conflict among the team, at other times conflict was resolved in the meetings. The team meetings, finally, emphasised the practice of knowledge creation and transfer around specific tasks or problems and in turn demonstrated how the teams collaborated and worked together. Different formal rituals served different purposes (Islam & Zyphur, 2009), yet they together constituted the practice of knowing ‘how to’ work within QMF’s culture and festival identity. I will now move on to describe informal rituals which were equally important for knowledge to be practised within QMF.

#### *4.3.2 Informal Rituals*

Informal rituals and even merely “ritual-like activities” (A. C. T. Smith & Stewart, 2011, p. 114) can take on many different forms within organisations such as having lunch or coffee together. These informal rituals provide opportunities for sharing information and knowledge on what employees are currently working on and how they are performing their tasks as well as for making sense and interpreting the ‘how

to' of the more formal information shared in meetings (A. C. T. Smith & Stewart, 2011). Deal and Kennedy (1982, p. 11) found that the Friday afternoon "beer-busts" in a certain highly successful company were a crucial informal ritual: "[T]he ritual does more than help people wind down after a busy work week. It serves as an important vehicle for informal communication and mingling across groups." Informal rituals such as eating, drinking together or talking in the hallway can furthermore bring about shared values and beliefs and symbolise community (Trice & Beyer, 1984). Dixon (1999, p. 47, emphasis in original) highlighted that, "[h]allways are places where *collective meaning* is made—in other words, meaning is not just exchanged, it is *constructed* in the dialogue between organizational members." In turn, such informal rituals constitute staff members' 'know how' that enables collaboration and effective transfer of knowledge. I will describe the informal rituals of sharing lunch at the office and engaging in informal communication below and highlight their importance as a knowledge practice reflecting on my own learning experience through these rituals.

Frequent informal talks in the hallway, the kitchen or during lunch supported open communication practices within QMF and enhanced staff members' understanding of who was working on what and how they performed their tasks. Experiences and stories were exchanged quickly and easily while staff members were making coffee or walked in and out of the office. Informal, spontaneous conversations and rituals are very valuable in terms of knowledge sharing (Hecker, 2012; Orr, 1996; Thomas, et al., 2001; Yang, 2007), as not only good news can be shared, but staff members are also receptive to bad news (Goleman, 2001). However, in the festival management literature, informal rituals have not yet been identified as important ways for knowledge management to be practised. I personally learned about current events through talking to staff members in the hallway, the kitchen or during lunch and, once the rehearsals started, even behind the stage. Certain things only started to make sense as I informally expressed my perspective and my questions to others and we collectively created meaning around them (Dixon, 1999). The example below describes a situation where two staff members (from different pods) and myself gathered in the kitchen to prepare lunch and engaged in an informal conversation:

Stella now comes in to prepare her lunch too and the two of them have a chat. I then explain that I would love to be part of at least one project of every team, even if it is just a small one. Veronica likes the idea and asks me whether I know anything about her team's projects. I confess that I only have a basic idea at this point, because there are too many things going on at the same time. Both of them agree, Stella says that she only knows about her group's projects, not about everybody else's. Veronica agrees, yes, it is a challenge to understand everything because everyone is so busy working on their own projects. She starts explaining what "her" projects are about: The one I am particularly interested in is called [...]. It will take place on the opening night of the festival at the Old Museum in Brisbane. It is based on a children's story which will be turned into a stage performance. Originally they wanted to have dancers from QUT [Queensland University of Technology] and also some kids dancing. But then a lot of the dancers dropped out and they had to adjust their ideas quite a bit within a certain budget, which was a big challenge. They had a casting for other dancers. Then they decided to do a theatrical performance with only a few dancers involved. I wasn't aware of all these challenges before, but some of the discussions I've heard at the staff meeting now start to make sense. (field notes, 18/05/11)

Being part of the team and sharing lunch with them gave me a chance to engage in informal conversations and rituals through which valuable information was exchanged—stories and experiences which I would not necessarily have heard in formal interviews. I therefore came to understand not only 'what' the different projects were about but also 'how' the teams were performing their tasks. In these informal conversation rituals, staff members moreover not only exchanged work-related information, but were also concerned about each other's personal wellbeing which was crucial particularly during the busy time of the festival and demonstrates QMF's ethic of care: *I run into Vicky in the hallway. She looks at me and says, "you look exhausted! Are you okay?!" Well, I AM exhausted and tired and I really need a break. But there is no chance; I just have to keep going. It's nice to see though, that others care about how I feel (field notes, 18/07/11).* Rituals and informal conversations can convey information about what kind of emotions may be expressed within the organisation and to whom (Domagalski, 1999).

During the period of two weeks before and the 17 days during the festival, furthermore, lunch was provided for the entire team every day. It was regarded as very important that staff members eat well during this busy time and to make it easier for them, the receptionist took on the challenge of cooking lunch for the entire team. Sometimes we all gathered in the board room and had lunch together, at other times the team members simply picked up a plate from the kitchen, then went back to their desks and ate while working. I noticed that the staff recognised that free lunch was very QMF specific; some told me no other festival would ever provide lunch for everyone. Sharing food, however, can be an important ritual that symbolises ‘family’ and belonging to the group (Visser, 1991). QMF staff members talked very positively about being treated well during times of stress, and these positive stories need to be made explicit as part of the organisational culture and ethic of care (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Furthermore, I identified that having lunch together provided regular yet informal opportunities for staff members to exchange information, ‘know how’, experiences and stories.

It is lunch time, so I go to the kitchen and grab some delicious soup. I meet (...) in the kitchen and we have a chat. He asks me how I am doing and I give him a brief update, and he also asks if I received the staff e-mail that he sent out, the feedback that they got yesterday. I say, “no”, and he promises to copy me in. He goes on to tell me they received very positive feedback yesterday about the Yarrabah school event. And he forwarded that message to all the staff and the board members and other important people. One lady from Arts Queensland called him later and she said “it made me cry.” And he said to her, “that's great, because we always need support and we will need more in the years to come, so that's exactly the reaction we were aiming for!” (field notes, 14/07/11)

The brief conversation with a staff member over lunch gave me a chance to hear a story about what QMF does and why these projects are important for them. Receiving e-mails of this kind formed an important part of my research, but only through informal conversations with staff members did I make sense of the context and broader context. Not only the importance of free lunch for staff members during the



stressful festival season, but also opportunities for knowledge creation and transfer as part of having lunch together therefore need to be acknowledged and appreciated as a knowledge enabler, similar to what Thatchenkery and Chowdhry (2007, p. 86) called “coffee talk.” I have identified this practice as an important informal ritual within the organisational culture that created a particular affective atmosphere of collaboration and belonging to QMF and indicated the organisational ethic of care (McAllister & Bigley, 2002).

The informal ritual of having lunch together formed an important part of the relational knowledge practice constituting staff members’ ‘know how’ that enabled them to work together and collaborate. Participants also recognised that it was crucial to support each other and to *“mak[e] people aware of what you're up to and being aware of what people around you are up to as well”* (interview, 12/07/11). Informal conversations and exchange of information over lunch or coffee enhanced this process among the team. In collaborative cultures relationships and trust among the team are crucial in order for knowledge to be effectively shared (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011; J.-K. Wang, et al., 2006). Informal rituals at QMF provided opportunities for these care relationships to be developed, enhanced and maintained which in turn contributed to staff members feeling comfortable to share information and knowledge.

#### ***4.4 Appreciating a Culture for Organisational Learning***

Through making the taken for granted knowledge practices of collaboration within the organisation explicit and critically reflecting on them, I aim to contribute to QMF becoming a ‘learning organisation’. Boreham and Morgan (2008, p. 78) argued that, “[s]ocial practices are ‘carried’ by members of a community, both individually and collectively, and a particular social order—such as an organisation that learns—is established when people living together in communities reproduce particular types of practice in their everyday interactions.” In the sections above I have described several practices of how strong working relationships between self-reflexive festival members

were built within QMF through which knowledge creation and transfer were effectively practised. Equally important at QMF was open communication and sharing information with everyone on the team, mainly through formal and informal rituals. Permanent and seasonal staff members understood the importance of open communication and collaboration and willingly shared their knowledge with each other which in turn enhanced knowledge creation and organisational learning. It was commonly acknowledged that nobody within the team kept secrets but rather collaborated with other staff members when necessary:

You've probably sat in and saw our conversations in the marketing room ... We just yell out! (laughs) There is no secrets here! You know, I wheel back and go, "hey, what do you think about this? Let's have a chat." And we all start talking, it's great. (...) The more people get involved, I mean someone else might have a better idea than you. So bring it on, let's all talk about it. (interview, 02/06/11)

In terms of relational knowledge management open communication is crucial, whereas a culture of secrecy can easily lead to knowledge hoarding (Boone, 2001; J. Hall & Sapsed, 2005; Kelly, 2000; Michailova & Sidorova, 2011). Following an Appreciative Inquiry approach to analysis, it is important to acknowledge and make visible what is working well within the organisation (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003) and how staff members can use their strengths to further develop working relationships and practices. Both being self-reflexive as individuals (Giddens, 1991) as well as reflection on their practices and learning are crucial, as Daudelin (2000, p. 301) defined:

"[r]eflection is the process of stepping back from an experience to ponder, carefully and persistently, its meaning to the self through the development of inferences; learning is the creation of meaning from past or current events that serves as a guide for future behaviour."

Below I will summarise what worked well within QMF and make visible how appreciating their knowledge practices and reinforcing the practices that are working can provide a common ground for future actions and decisions (Feldman &

Orlikowski, 2011). I will also point out the dangers and potential pitfalls of each practice and thus highlight critical reflections for organisational learning (Gray, 2007).

I have described how the QMF identity was shared through a common culture and vision among the team as well as how staff members communicated and performed the QMF identity and vision in their day-to-day practices. The communication processes provided a shared understanding of what the festival promised to be and how it wanted to achieve its goals, which was crucial for the team in order to be able to work together towards these goals and share a common language. A shared vision is also vital for organisational learning to occur as staff members strive to achieve goals that matter to them (Senge, 2006). It has to be acknowledged, however, that the vision was determined by social practices within QMF and determined them in return (Alvesson, 1996). The social practices indicated what kind of new knowledge was possible to be produced at QMF and the frames of thinking around it. At the same time, they enabled and regulated what was not possible or sayable within the organisation. All members of the festival organisation were therefore shaped by this discursive power of the QMF identity and vision (Foucault, 1978, 1980). The discursive field of the festival produced their thinking, social practices and working culture and created a community among staff members.

In order for QMF as an organisation to learn from its current practices, appreciating what works well is equally important as reflecting on potential risks associated with these practices (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Van Tiem & Rosenzweig, 2006). QMF staff members strongly believed in their festival identity, yet did not question why their shared identity was crucial for knowledge to be practised and shared. I therefore made these connections visible and provided an opportunity for QMF to reflect upon their practices. Being aware of further potential risks to its strong identity and values is important for QMF's long-term success. Deal and Kennedy (1982) maintained that an organisational culture with strong values may lead to obsolescence and resistance to change in the longer term. The environment,

for example in regards to community engagement, may change making the current values and beliefs no longer relevant to the festival's success. In turn, staff members might then struggle with applying their current 'know how' of QMF's vision in a new context.

Within QMF the board of directors was partly responsible for the long-term strategy of the organisation and needed to work closely with the senior management team in regards to reflecting on the festival identity and image as well as their practices. The QMF board of directors saw their role as "*mak[ing] sure that the organisation can sustain*" (interview, 22/06/11). In their opinion, not only financial support was crucial for the success of the organisation, but also a long-term strategic plan that provided a shared vision and understanding as well as was adaptable to potential changes in the environment. In the cultural industries not only artistic values may change over time but also market economics (Lampel, Lant, & Shamsie, 2000). It was therefore crucial for board members to work closely with the festival staff as it was the staff members who were out in the communities, working on the projects day by day; they were hence able to provide a practice-based picture of how QMF fitted within the environment and broader strategic plan. A critical reflection on their practices by both management and board of directors provides the basis for organisational learning in the long term.

The second practice I have identified enhancing knowledge creation and transfer within QMF was the formal and informal rituals through which staff members came to know 'how to' collaborate and work together effectively. Making visible the taken for granted practices of engaging in these rituals therefore contributes to QMF appreciating what they are doing well in terms of knowledge management. Transparency, for example, was identified by Whitney and Trosten-Bloom (2003) as a core value of Appreciative Inquiry in one of their client organisations. Within the QMF office, transparency was clearly evident and an important core value too, initiated by the senior management team and aspired by every staff member. In the staff meetings an open and democratic approach to sharing information was practised

which provided an opportunity for festival members to come to learn ‘how to’ share information and knowledge with others on the team and ‘how to’ communicate both formally as well as informally. The organisation therefore “make[s] individuals “want” what the system needs in order to perform well” (Lyotard, Bennington, & Massumi, 1984, p. 62). Through this exercise of power (Foucault, 1977), staff members governed themselves as committed QMF workers knowing that they needed to share insights and ideas with everyone in order for the festival organisation to run successfully. Being self-reflexive subjects formed part of this practice, as it allowed festival members to be true and authentic to themselves in regards to their values of working with others (Giddens, 1991). In order for QMF to learn from what it is doing well and to use its strengths in the future, it is crucial to reflect upon the importance of these rituals as knowledge enablers (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). A lack of formal and informal rituals within the organisation would mean losing opportunities for knowledge transfer and therefore informal means of knowing ‘how to’ collaborate (J. S. Brown & Duguid, 1991). Making the different knowledge processes and practices within such rituals explicit, however, highlights how staff members worked together and performed their tasks within a collaborative environment.

It has been argued in the literature that a collaborative culture in turn enhances the creation of new knowledge not only across organisational boundaries but also geographical boundaries which helps the organisation stay innovative and competitive (Du Plessis, 2006). Underpinning QMF’s collaborative culture was the emotional support and organisational ethic of care which I have identified within formal and informal rituals. Yang (2007) and Suppiah and Singh Sandhu (2011) further maintained that an organisational culture that supports high employee commitment and collaboration is crucial for knowledge management and organisational learning. However, in festival organisations, collaboration can be difficult to achieve as staff members only work together for a short period of time, under pressure and they often have not established the necessary relationships. It is important that the senior management team creates a collaborative culture and provides several opportunities, such as formal and informal rituals, for seasonal staff members to embrace and share this culture. In terms of organisational learning, therefore, making the taken for

granted organisational rituals visible is crucial in order for QMF to come to understand and appreciate how knowledge was informally transferred among the team. Knowledge is more than information in checklists, manuals and policies, and I therefore made visible the embodied and storied activities of how knowledge was practised within QMF.

Rituals can further provide a sense of belonging to the team and a shared understanding of what the organisation is and aims to achieve (A. C. T. Smith & Stewart, 2011). Whitney et al. (2010) argued that from an Appreciative Inquiry perspective, a sense of belonging shapes collaboration and co-creation because when staff members feel included, they feel they are part of and care about the organisation. Using the ‘family’ metaphor within the team was therefore an important part of creating and sharing the QMF collaborative organisational culture. High commitment to the job and to QMF did not simply stop when the festival was over and the main job duties were done. Staff members were still emotionally attached to the organisation and the ‘family’, which made it very difficult to let go as one participant recounted:

There is no rest. So when you’re finished, you still feel like you need to keep going. You just have to learn to stop. Which I’m still trying to do. (...) I came in on Monday [the day after the festival finale and staff party]! Because I was like, “oh, I should at least read my e-mails ...” (interview, 03/08/11)

In terms of knowledge management and organisational learning it is crucial to recognise staff members’ commitment, as the festival organisation can aim to capture some of the knowledge from seasonal staff members before they leave, particularly experiences and stories of success. At QMF, for example, an e-mail was sent out to everyone about archiving and storing all the relevant (explicit) information so that staff members could work on those tasks before leaving the organisation. Several one-on-one and group debrief meetings were also conducted, which gave seasonal staff members a chance to share their experiences with the senior management team, particularly some of the tacit knowledge that cannot easily be documented. These

formal and informal occasions for knowledge transfer are common practices in festival and event organisations in order to store relevant information and therefore an important part of knowledge management and organisational learning (e.g., Allen, et al., 2011; O'Hara & Beard, 2006; Prosser & Rutledge, 2003). Carrying over some of the explicit as well as tacit knowledge—as constituted in and through action and practice (Orlikowski, 2002)—to the next festival season, and therefore engaging in a continuous cycle of reflecting on their knowledge practices, enhances organisational learning for QMF as a whole. For QMF to make explicit their taken for granted practices of engaging in formal as well as informal rituals will further increase their understanding of how knowledge can be practised beyond the more traditional processes of information exchange through manuals, checklists and other forms of documented knowledge.

#### ***4.5 Summary***

Knowledge management practices within QMF were relationally constructed between self-reflexive festival members through their shared festival identity which shaped meaning-making and collaboration among the team. The “intersection of identity (“who we are”), knowledge (“what we know”), and practice (“what we do”)” (Nag, et al., 2007, p. 842), was highlighted, describing the QMF identity and community cultural development ethos as well as their formal and informal rituals as knowledge practices through which staff members gained ‘know how’ that enabled them to work together effectively. The storying of QMF’s organisation identity as an empowering and transformative festival with a strong community cultural development ethos was therein identified as a crucial knowledge practice. Stories and narratives were vital in understanding knowledge management as a relational practice rather than merely sharing knowledge through manuals, checklists and other documents. Knowledge management within the festival organisation was regarded as an embodied practice allowing festival members to listen to and observe ‘how to’ work together, as well as a storied practice that enabled them to come to know ‘how to’ identify with the organisation and ‘how to’ work collaboratively.

QMF festival members embraced and embodied a shared festival identity which constituted 'know how' that enabled them to effectively contribute to the festival vision. Equally important was the practice of creating rituals for knowledge sharing in order for QMF members to come to know 'how to' work within the organisation's collaborative culture. Underpinning these practices was staff members' emotional attachment to the 'QMF family'. QMF staff members strongly believed in their culture and identity, yet this identification was taken for granted and not recognised as shaping their knowledge practices. As an ethnographic researcher with QMF, I therefore made explicit their taken for granted practices and applied an Appreciative Inquiry approach to reflection and learning from what worked well within the organisation.

I demonstrated in this chapter how and why a shared understanding among the team of 'who they are' (Gorelick, et al., 2004) and what QMF aims to achieve was the common ground for effective knowledge management to be practised within a collaborative organisational culture. In the following two chapters I will provide examples of how these knowledge practices were further enacted and embodied, both in internal relationships between working subjects, as well as externally in working with different members of the communities.



## Chapter Five: Appreciating Interdisciplinary Teamwork Practices

### STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION TO CO-AUTHORED PUBLISHED PAPER

This chapter includes parts of a co-authored paper in section 5.3.2. The bibliographic details of the co-authored paper, including all authors, are: Stadler, R., Fullagar, S. & Reid, S. (in press): The professionalisation of festival organisations: A relational approach to knowledge management, *Event Management*, 18(1)

My contribution to the paper involved: the provision of the data, preliminary analysis of the data into a usable format and providing direction on the scope and structure of the analysis and publication.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Raphaela Stadler

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Simone Fullagar

## ***5.1 Introduction***

In this chapter I build on my previous analysis of how knowledge was practised within QMF's identity and culture to examine how internal organisational relations produced knowledge practices between self-reflexive staff members that enabled collaboration within the team. Appreciating interdisciplinary teamwork practices forms the central theme of the chapter and highlights the complexity of how relational knowledge management was practised among the QMF team. QMF used a specific human resource management strategy that emphasised relationality and collaboration. This strategy enhanced the organisation's culture and shared identity and underpinned knowledge practices within the team. The human resource strategy and structure of a festival organisation is created and produced through practice and shapes the way people are able to work together, support each other, and together create the festival experience (Van der Wagen, 2007). Recruiting and selecting the right mix of people with diverse backgrounds yet a shared understanding and appreciation of the organisation's identity and values informs collaboration among the team (Nankervis, Compton, Baird, & Coffey, 2011; Werner & DeSimone, 2006).

Research into knowledge management and human resource management suggests that the two are related in terms of the effectiveness of team collaboration and culture (Currie & Kerrin, 2003; Gorelick, et al., 2004; Yahya & Goh, 2002). Gloet and Berrell (2003, p. 83) maintained that, "[t]he relationship between KM and HRM is a complex one; the more aligned the strategies underlying both of these arenas, the more contribution both can make to quality practices and overall organizational performance." By learning 'how to' work together in order to achieve the organisation's aims and objectives, staff development processes and organisational structures facilitate working together in more informal ways and thus enhance knowledge creation and transfer within the team. The success of knowledge management hence hinges on an explicit appreciation of staff members' relational and subjective performance which forms the theme of analysis in this chapter.

QMF's strong collaborative culture was supported by a human resource management strategy and an organisational structure that emphasised staff alignment and effective teamwork. Through human resource management, communication and the transfer of knowledge within and across teams can be enhanced and potential knowledge sharing boundaries between these teams removed (Ulrich, 2007). I was not officially recruited by QMF, nor was I a member of one particular team but rather moved around the office to spend time with different staff members and teams. Hence, I reflect on the QMF human resource strategy from afar based on the observations I made. In particular, I identified two human resource management practices within QMF: people and culture strategies and creating a collaborative structure. The two practices constituted vital 'know how' that enabled the organisation to effectively manage the workforce and to transfer knowledge within and across interdisciplinary teams. The structure of an organisation, however, is not fixed, but rather a dynamic constellation of relationships (Küpers, 2005). Understanding both knowledge management and human resource management as practised therefore highlights the organisation's dynamic efforts of aligning these strategies.

In terms of the first practice, identified as people and culture strategies, I will highlight two tacit activities constituting the practice: recruiting and selecting interdisciplinary teams and processes of developing new skills, which in turn enhanced senior staff members' 'know how' embodied in managing the workforce. The senior management team employed a relational approach to human resource management in line with their collaborative culture. Not only were staff members recruited and selected based on their background and knowledge, but also in terms of how well they could work together and whether they embraced the festival identity and vision. Festival organisations face a particular challenge in terms of staff training and development as there is only limited time for conducting training sessions with seasonal staff (Allen, et al., 2011). In terms of knowledge management, however, staff alignment assures staff members share the goals of the festival and can help the organisation become a learning organisation with a solid memory, despite most of them leaving after the festival season (Getz, 2007). I will discuss how QMF achieved staff development through on-the-job learning and job rotation processes. Through

gaining shared experience and tacit knowledge, knowledge creation and transfer practices within the organisation and particularly among the teams were further enhanced as well as important 'know how' created that enabled effective internal work practices.

The second practice, which I call creating a collaborative structure, is based on the understanding that diverse backgrounds and collaboration among the team support knowledge creation and transfer within the complex QMF environment. It was constituted by the two activities of designing teams and office space and identifying roles and responsibilities, and in turn contributed to staff members' 'know how' that enabled them to effectively share knowledge within interdisciplinary teams. QMF has created an organisational structure that emphasised interdisciplinary teams or 'pods'. I will highlight how these teams were created, how they worked together and shared knowledge not only within each team/pod but also across the pods. The interdisciplinary team structure is unique to QMF, as in festival organisations, teams are usually formed around functional areas (Van der Wagen, 2007). However, I will argue that having teams of people with diverse backgrounds and experience enhanced knowledge practices and ways of working together within QMF and therefore needs to be made explicit and appreciated (Pelle III, 2006). An interdisciplinary team structure with an emphasis on knowledge generation and transfer further supports creativity and innovation in festival organisations (Carlsen, Andersson, Ali-Knight, Jaeger, & Taylor, 2010). Within QMF, in each pod jobs and task roles were distributed differently; some were formally defined, others taken on informally. I identified how staff members within QMF employed not only their formal job roles but also embodied implicit knowledge management roles and responsibilities. In my role as the researcher I aimed to make their knowledge management roles visible. An explicit understanding of knowledge management roles and responsibilities contributes to professionalisation. I will hence highlight how the QMF collaborative structure enhanced staff members' 'know how' of effectively sharing knowledge within interdisciplinary teams through their different roles.

The table below, adapted from Orlikowski (2002, p. 257), summarises the two human resource management practices underpinning knowledge management within QMF, as well as the activities and ‘know how’ constituted within each practice. The table provides an outline for the chapter.

<b>Practice</b>	<b>Activities Comprising the Practice (Tacit Knowledge)</b>	<b>Knowing Constituted in the Practice</b>
People and culture strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruiting and selecting interdisciplinary teams</li> <li>• Developing new skills</li> </ul>	Knowing how to manage the workforce
Creating a collaborative structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Designing teams and office space</li> <li>• Identifying roles and responsibilities</li> </ul>	Knowing how to share knowledge within interdisciplinary teams

Table 4: Practices, activities and knowing within QMF’s organisational structure (adapted from Orlikowski, 2002, p. 257)

Within QMF the interdisciplinary teamwork practices identified contributed to an organisational structure supporting and appreciating collaboration. In the final section of this chapter, I will therefore emphasise my Appreciative Inquiry approach (Whitney, et al., 2010) to make explicit how appreciating the collaborative structure enabled QMF to become a ‘learning organisation’. Making visible what works well within QMF in terms of staff continuity and reflection on their day-to-day practices through my research further enables building ‘know how’ of managing the workforce and sharing knowledge within the teams. Knowledge is thereby practised relationally through embodied interaction with others. At the same time, knowledge is structured and regulated through organisational arrangements such as teams/pods and spaces as well as processes of staff recruitment and development. Hence it is governed through the exercise of power and authority. By employing a practice-based perspective to my research emphasising those knowledge practices that worked well within QMF, I reflect on the context in which knowledge was practised and festival members’ actions within a “constantly-evolving historical-cultural setting” (Corradi, et al., 2010, p. 275).

## *5.2 People and Culture Strategies*

An organisation's human resource management strategy includes both people and organisational culture. The aim of an organisation's human resource management strategy is to have the right mix of employees in terms of number, types and skills at any given point in time to meet the organisation's present and future requirements (Nankervis, et al., 2011). An effective HR strategy is in line with the overall organisational strategy and objectives as well as adaptable to the external organisational environment (Allen, et al., 2011; Mosley, Megginson, & Pietri, 2001). The 'pulsating' nature of festival organisations, however, creates particular challenges (Hanlon & Cuskelly, 2002) where "[t]he workforce builds very rapidly close to event delivery" (Van der Wagen, 2007, p. 28). The different functional areas in a festival organisation conduct recruitment and selection processes at different points in time throughout the festival life cycle in order to meet their specific staffing needs. For example, marketing professionals usually come on board several weeks or months before the festival, whereas volunteers only start a few days before the festival. Nankervis et al. (2011) suggested that for the purpose of staff productivity and retention, aligning these internal and external issues with the human resource strategy of an organisation and with the organisation's culture and values is vital. A human resource strategy that is strongly aligned with the organisation's culture supports and enhances knowledge management practices (Lepak & Snell, 2007), particularly in an organisation where employees collaborate in order to co-create the complex festival experience. Both people and culture strategies of human resource management therefore underpin the effectiveness and success of staff members' knowledge management practices.

Within QMF, recruiting and selecting interdisciplinary teams and developing new skills formed important activities within the organisation's people and culture strategies. Both these activities were practised with a relational focus on having staff members who work together effectively and who collaborate. Hence, I discuss the

QMF human resource management strategy not as given and fixed, but rather as relationally produced and created. In turn, the recruitment and staff development activities constituted senior staff members' 'know how' that enabled them to effectively manage the workforce.

### *5.2.1 Recruiting and Selecting Interdisciplinary Teams*

Not only among the core team, but also among the seasonal team and the board of directors of QMF, there was an understanding that the way the festival was previously run with high staff turnover—that is, gearing up for the festival season and then getting rid of almost the entire team before hiring a new team for the next festival season—was not sustainable in the long term. Based on their human resource strategy, the recruitment and selection of the right permanent and seasonal staff came to be understood as crucial. Recruitment is “the process of attempting to locate and attract a pool of suitably qualified and experienced people to apply for existing or anticipated positions within an organisation” (Nankervis, et al., 2011, p. 203). From a pool of recruited people, the organisation is then able to select the best person for the job.

The QMF senior management team employed three particular recruitment and selection strategies: firstly, permanent and seasonal staff members were selected based on their individual experience and backgrounds. They needed to have at least some sort of background in the arts or in working for festivals. In festival organisations in particular, these embodied experiences and staff members' tacit knowledge are highly valuable for the organisation, as there is little time for training and learning (Van der Wagen, 2007). The organisation was also aiming to keep as many permanent staff members during the off-season and to retain seasonal staff members who have previously worked for QMF. Through this highly effective strategy they minimised the issue of high staff turnover, an issue that poses challenges to festival and event organisations (Allen, et al., 2011; Van der Wagen, 2007).

Secondly, QMF paid attention to how existing and new staff members embraced the organisation's identity and culture. The organisational culture was very strong and the senior management team therefore aimed to carry on this culture not only during the festival season but throughout the entire festival life cycle. Nankervis et al. (2011, p. 243) argued that, "[n]ot only will an employee need to fit the specific job but they will also need to fit with the values and culture of the organisation." The more staff members embrace these values, the easier it is for the organisation to build or perpetuate their shared culture, as I have discussed in Chapter 4. A shared understanding of the organisational culture supports effective knowledge practices as it allows staff members to know what is expected of them and to know 'how to' appropriately interpret and behave in unfamiliar situations (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005; Werner & DeSimone, 2006).

Thirdly, at QMF great care was taken when the teams and pods were formed. People were put together in these teams based on how well they worked together and complemented each other. Again, in festival and event organisations this is even more important due to the short timeframe of getting people to work together successfully and under pressure (Allen, et al., 2011). Choosing the right mix of people based on their personality traits as well as diverse and complementing backgrounds and experience is therefore crucial when forming teams. Each team may find different ways of working together; however, if the right people have been chosen, they embrace the same overall vision and values of the organisation and are able to work in synergy. In terms of practising knowledge management, recruiting and selecting people with key strengths in 'working with others' is therefore crucial, as they complement each other in terms of knowledge and skills, communicate and work together effectively and based on their shared understanding and culture are able to overcome potential barriers (Lepak & Snell, 2007; Ulrich, 2007). I will provide examples of these practices below, highlight the strengths of each practice and discuss how they constituted 'know how' that enabled managing the workforce. In festival and event organisations effective staff recruitment and selection is generally regarded as important (Allen, et al., 2011; Beaven, et al., 2009; Van der Wagen, 2007), yet the



connections between human resource management and knowledge management within festival organisations have not been made so far.

Individual backgrounds, experience and embodied 'know how' of working for different festivals were regarded as very important for QMF. In recruiting and selecting seasonal staff for the 2011 festival season, QMF paid particular attention to their diverse backgrounds and how these fitted with their roles at QMF. Elisa, for example, was a returning seasonal employee, who had a lot of experience in her area:

I've worked on a million festivals and I was naturally drawn into working on festivals. I think because they are project-based and that's what I liked, that concept of working on something from start to its conclusion. (...) But I've done them in all different shapes and sizes, so I haven't kind of been bound by a specific type, like a high-art end or an educational focus or whatever. So my range of events that I've produced inside those festivals have been hugely different (...) And when I reflect back from my working in arts but also having an educational background, I've used both the whole way through. I've always found myself working on projects that were about either education or communities or exploring something inside a project or whatever. Naturally drawn to it, I guess ... So that's kind of my background. (interview, 16/08/11)

Elisa had a vast background in working for many different festival organisations in all 'different shapes and sizes'. Quite interestingly, she not only had a degree in production but also in education and has found herself in jobs where she can combine her backgrounds in both fields. At QMF she could apply both degrees as well, particularly in working with different communities and developing pieces with them. Being self-reflexive about her past (Giddens, 1991) allowed Elisa to come to anticipate what her future with QMF might encompass. Furthermore, with a background in different areas and therefore a lot of different embodied skills in 'working with others' it was not a problem for Elisa during the 2009 festival season when *they didn't have a stage manager for one particular project and she had to jump in and tell everyone what to do and how to do it (field notes, 06/04/11)*. Hiring staff with the right skills and capabilities to perform their jobs and to be able to multi-

task was regarded as an important strategy for the festival organisation. Not having the necessary experience and skills could easily lead to increased stress in an already stressful workplace and environment (Cranwell-Ward & Abbey, 2005). The complexity of different roles within the festival can be overcome through employing staff members with a range of different backgrounds and experiences who complement each other in terms of knowledge and skills. I identified that this practice constituted the 'know how' of managing QMF's workforce. The 'know how' in turn contributed to the success of QMF and therefore needs to be made explicit and shared as a strength of the organisation (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999).

Elisa also emphasised in the interview that the festival world consists of a very close-knit group of people who all rotate and move around between different festivals. She enjoyed working with the same people again but under different umbrellas. Therefore, not only her personal background came into play when working for different festival organisations, but also the relationships she has built with other professionals over the years. Building informal networks of trusting contacts is crucial in the industry, as it facilitates the creation and transfer of knowledge (Currie & Kerrin, 2003). Furthermore, a lot of the shared experience gained through working for different festivals is tacit and embodied knowledge and gaining this kind of experience is regarded as an important quality in the industry (Beaven & Wright, 2006; Ferriani, Corrado, & Boschetti, 2005). Embodied knowledge from previous festival work experience can be described as 'know how' of working with others and is gained through processes such as listening and communicating with others as well as observing how things are done. In turn, 'know how' of working with others is crucial in the industry. Ferriani et al. (2005, p. 274) argued that:

“[i]n a context where no one individual is in a position to describe the full knowledge required to perform the task and where the knowledge has an important interpretive component, the practice of working repeatedly together allows to retain and accumulate know how and practices that are highly relationship specific.”

Building relationships with other professionals in the industry and working with them in different contexts and for different organisations is therefore crucial in terms of sharing experience and tacit knowledge, as relationships can strengthen the way staff members communicate and work with each other as well as make people open up to learning and accepting different ways of working (Anderson, et al., 2008; Whitney, et al., 2010). However, Elisa also acknowledged that, “*what works for one [festival organisation] might not necessarily work for another*” (interview, 16/08/11).

Not only were individual backgrounds and experience important for QMF in recruiting and selecting staff members, but also how they embraced the festival organisation’s vision and identity. Embracing the organisational identity led to staff members being able to contribute to the achievement of the vision: “*I think people [on the team] have bought into that and understand. To different degrees, but yeah, they understand what we're trying to do*” (interview, 09/06/11). Staff members’ identity investment not only made possible a shared understanding of what the QMF identity and vision was, but also high commitment to work towards achieving the QMF goals, as I have discussed in Chapter 4. Furthermore, it enhanced staff members’ understanding of the broader context of their job and the arts (Beaven, et al., 2009). Staff members needed to combine their administrative, technical and organisational skills with an artistic understanding of what QMF aimed to achieve. Recruiting staff members who embraced the festival identity and embodied their tasks as well as required festival work therefore underpinned knowing ‘how to’ manage the workforce.

Finally, forming the teams and pods for the 2011 festival season, QMF permanent staff paid attention to individual personalities and aimed to put people together in teams and pods who worked together efficiently. I was intrigued by one participant’s comment about how the QMF senior management staff created the pods and distributed the projects among the team:

I do take a pride in getting the right person for the job. And that’s not necessarily the best person for the job! That’s one of the fun parts of my job, working with

Maria when we get the events. Luckily for this year they formed themselves out of last festival. There was another person that was in Elisa's team and didn't really work, but Linda was here too. And we could see that Linda fit in better. We lost Mike and at that point we were not necessarily going to replace him. And Veronica had a different person working with her. But Claire worked with Mike, but I could see that they [Veronica and Claire] would work well together. (...) So therefore, we get a project, we work out who the best person for that project is—and that may not necessarily be the producer! It may be the tech manager, okay? So we say, okay that really fits with that tech manager, let's give it to them, because that's going to be our strongest hand. And then we form the team around [that person] ... We might have a project coordinator in first and then let's get a producer who works well with that person, let's get a tech manager in ... We have to look at the way people get on. You just look at the event and at the person and then see how they would get on with other people. And you see, well actually both teams in there, the way [they] work together, they are just like one person, it's amorphous. (...) You can't see the seams, you really can't see the seams. Where one area stops and the other area starts. That's great, that works! (interview, 09/06/11)

As this member of the senior management team explained, on the one hand, within QMF, individuals were put together into pods based on how they worked together in previous festival seasons. On the other hand, the projects themselves were also used to decide who would work together. Certain individuals had experience in working with particular communities or in particular genres. Therefore, QMF distributed the projects accordingly to ensure the most effective and synergistic way of working on these projects. If a certain project fitted with one particular staff member based on their strengths and embodied 'know how', the team was then formed around that person. The aim was, as emphasised in the interview above, to have the necessary backgrounds and experience within the pods, as well as have staff members who worked together effectively and supported each other in order to come to understand 'how to' practice knowledge collectively. Commonly used in Appreciative Leadership (Whitney, et al., 2010), identifying people's strengths and aligning them accordingly enhances collaboration within the team as their strengths are complementary. This alignment strategy is also frequently used in project-based organisations to ensure that

knowledge within and across the teams is not only distributed among various experts but also shared effectively (Bresnen, Edelman, Newell, Scarbrough, & Swan, 2005; Fong, 2005; J. P. Lewis, 1998).

For QMF it was important to have teams and pods that worked well together and shared a “positive emotional attitude in their work teams” (Ashkanasy, 2002, p. 17). Staff members who are put into work teams that are built around a common strength or particular way of collaborating are able to manage their emotions effectively and efficiently, because displaying their emotions within the team is part of a meaning-making process (Vince & Gabriel, 2011). I have identified that staff members came to feel emotionally attached to ‘their’ projects which was crucial in terms of building a shared sub-culture (Lok & Crawford, 1999), commitment and understanding around these projects, which were all different but together created the festival experience. For QMF, the staff alignment strategy hence constituted ‘know how’ in regards to effectively managing the workforce. One of my reflections also demonstrates how well the strategy worked for QMF:

Today I asked myself why certain pods work on certain projects. It seems like *Drag Queen’sLand* really fits with pod 1. They are a quite crazy bunch of people with a vast range of backgrounds in their fields, and they have already created a massive network of experts around the topic. The other pod working on *Ailan Kores* is quite different. They are quiet, always focused and very organised. Some of them have worked on a similar project in 2009, so they can now build on those relationships they have established with the community. I wonder how things would go if the projects were distributed differently?! I’m sure it would still work—after all, they are all professionals—but they probably wouldn’t be so passionate about what they are doing and working on. It’s the personal investment in the projects and passion for them that seems to make them so special for each pod. (field notes, 23/06/11)

Distributing the QMF projects among the pods according to their interests and backgrounds was very effective in terms of creating excitement and passion for the projects. Pod members’ embodied ‘know how’ of managing ‘their’ projects was

shared through inter-subjective relationships and facilitated day-to-day work practices within the pods as they shared a common understanding and passion for ‘their’ projects. It is important to mention, however, that not all pod members started working for QMF at the same time. Some were engaged for a year, others only for three or four months before the festival season, thus emphasising the dynamic nature of QMF’s human resource management strategy. Furthermore, the intense festival work environment over a short period of time created excitement within the teams as they shared moments of success and anticipation. An emotional attachment to ‘their’ projects was crucial in the co-creation process, however, could potentially lead to issues and problems if something goes wrong throughout the process. Steve pointed out, *“it’s all about the human beings which you could easily ruin. Even just one person in the mix that is into their own power, would be easy to ruin everything”* (interview, 05/08/11).

QMF’s recruitment and selection strategy as described in this section can be summarised as follows: first, the organisation aimed to employ permanent as well as seasonal staff members with extensive experience, diverse backgrounds and ‘know how’ in festival management. Most staff members were encouraged to come back every festival season, which enhanced efficient team work and building ‘know how’ over the years that enabled collaboration. During the off-season most seasonal staff members moved on to other festival or arts organisations and built more relationships with other experts in the industry. Second, in order to develop a shared understanding among the staff, QMF also aimed to recruit people who shared the organisation’s identity and collaborative culture. In terms of knowledge management, this is crucial as they not only complemented each other in terms of ‘know how’ and skills, but also were able to communicate and work together effectively as they had a shared understanding of what QMF aimed to achieve. Finally, QMF carefully selected staff members based on how well they worked together in their teams and pods. Individuals were put together into teams based on how they worked together in previous festival seasons, as well as based on their experience in working with particular communities or in particular genres. The projects themselves were therefore used to decide who would work together. The aim was to have several teams who

shared a passion for ‘their’ projects and to create synergy by having individual team members who complemented each other in terms of ‘know how’, skills and backgrounds.

The QMF recruitment and selection strategy effectively underpinned relational knowledge management and enhanced senior staff members’ ‘know how’ in regards to managing the workforce. The organisational values about collaboration were embraced within the organisational culture and human resource management strategy. By discussing the culture and knowledge practices as relationally produced and created between festival members, I emphasised a practice-based perspective on knowledge management. The alignment of organisational culture and the QMF human resource management strategy further enhanced not only individual staff members’ strengths and ‘know how,’ but also team and organisational strengths thus contributing to the success of the organisation (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003).

### *5.2.2 Developing New Skills*

Informal processes of developing new skills is the second tacit practice I have identified forming part of the QMF people and culture strategy. Human resource development emphasises long-term development of staff as well as senior managers’ more complex skills and knowledge (Werner & DeSimone, 2006). The process can be formal as well as informal such as gaining on-the-job experience. Staff training, on the other hand, is typically short term, covering basic skills development (Nankervis, et al., 2011). Within QMF, staff members developed new skills through job rotation as well as through on-the-job learning and mentoring. Similar to what Orlikowski (2002) found in her research, individual skill development was not merely an encouraged principle within QMF, but was enacted and embodied by staff members in their day-to-day work practices. From my perspective as an ethnographic researcher without being a member of one specific team but rather observing several staff members and teams from afar, I will elaborate on both staff development strategies below and highlight how these contributed to the human resource management ‘know how’ of the organisation.

Job rotation is regarded as a highly effective human resource development approach. Currie and Kerrin (2003) found in their study on human resource management in a pharmaceutical company that those employees who engaged in job rotation or lateral career movement had a better understanding of the relationships between different functions and their specific roles and responsibilities. In terms of relational knowledge management, therefore, through job rotation staff members can develop a broader understanding of the organisation and their ‘know how’ to contribute to the organisation’s aims, as well as develop strong relationships with different individuals and teams within the organisation. If staff members later need to fill in for someone who is sick or out of the office, they already possess the required skills and embodied ‘know how’ which can be useful in festival organisations during rehearsal periods, bump-ins or performances. Job rotation therefore importantly shapes staff members’ ‘know how’ of effectively managing the workforce.

Not only did QMF staff members have a range of backgrounds and experience in working for different festivals, but some of them had also moved from one QMF job to another over the years and thus acquired internal expertise in different areas. Some staff members started as secondments several years ago and then moved on to other positions. Peter, for example, told me about his QMF journey:

In 2005 I started off as a logistics secondment and then took on that role when the logistics person left. But she was still there, so there were two of us doing the job. So I was a secondment in 2005. Then in 2007 I came in as a driver. And a lot of the staff here from 2005 went on to [a different festival] in 2006. So I worked with them there. 2009 and 2011 I’ve done the same job now. (...) Yeah, I’ve done a few festivals back to back ... (interview, 16/08/11)

Peter has gained a lot of experience in different jobs with QMF over the last years which he can now combine and use in his current (permanent) position. Being self-reflexive about his previous experience, Peter acknowledged how moving from one QMF role to another over the years has allowed him to understand the festival from



different perspectives. Others started out as secondments too and have now moved on to project coordinator roles or similar positions. These examples of job rotation within the organisation were highly effective in terms of knowledge management. Staff members learned from each job, acquired new skills and over time understood the broader context of their role within the organisation. Sharing experiences within each job enhanced staff members' self-esteem and self-awareness and positively affected their careers (Hart, Conklin, & Allen, 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Du Plessis (2006, p. 52) argued that, "[r]eusing knowledge in different contexts stimulates staff to improve on past solutions, or to create new knowledge, thereby creating a culture of innovation." Starting out as newcomers with little responsibility over small tasks, staff members later take on more responsibilities and develop new 'know how' and skills through greater participation within the organisation (Abfalter, et al., 2012; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Werner & DeSimone, 2006). One of my reflections also emphasises the effectiveness of this staff development strategy within QMF and demonstrates how team members appreciated each other:

The senior management team watches their secondments closely and if they do a good job, they will be invited to come back for a paid position for the next festival. This way they already know the basics of their job and can take on more responsibilities next time. It seems to work, everybody is impressed with how well the three of them now perform in their roles. (field notes, 04/07/11)

Through this practice not only simple tasks and jobs were taken on by secondments, but over time also more complex issues involving more responsibility. Secondments were able to learn from professionals in the field who acted as their mentors and reflect on their practices (Kram, 1983, 1985; Mosley, et al., 2001; Wenger, 1998). Working together with a mentor further provided an opportunity for secondments to come to learn 'how to' embody QMF's identity and 'how to' work within the QMF culture. The secondments approached their jobs in a highly effective way and felt partly responsible for the success of the projects. Furthermore,

"[m]entorship is a facilitative way of sharing knowledge between people, usually of different levels in the hierarchy of an organisation. (...) Mentorship often not only assists with the sharing of knowledge, but can also lean towards

the creation of knowledge, and one often finds that a staff member and a mentor can co-create knowledge on a specific topic” (Du Plessis, 2006, p. 144).

At the same time, the more experienced staff members appreciated working with newcomers who often added variety and new ways of thinking to the team, a common practice in Appreciative Leadership (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). The inter-subjective relationships between team members and mentors/mentees thereby produced relational knowledge practices which enhanced informal ways of working together. Within QMF, I identified the mentoring practice as implicit and taken for granted, yet it contributed to staff development and enhanced individuals’ on-the-job learning experience. Making the practice explicit therefore provides an opportunity for senior staff members to reflect on their ‘know how’ of managing the QMF workforce.

In festival and event organisation, general training is usually provided for all staff members in areas such as health and safety or first aid, as well as position specific training relating to their functional roles (Allen, et al., 2011; Van der Wagen, 2007). The most important element of staff development in festivals and events, however, is on-the-job learning, through which more complex experience and tacit knowledge can be gained as well as relational knowledge management developed. Not only can new or seasonal staff members learn from the permanent staff, but also from each other. On-the-job learning, therefore, also provides opportunities for socialising and building relationships and interpersonal skills (Nankervis, et al., 2011; Werner & DeSimone, 2006). Within QMF, on-the-job learning included learning ‘how to’ deal with the complexity of each community cultural development project combined with working under pressure and with a range of different people. Whereas a certain amount of knowledge or a university degree is expected in the events industry today, the more tacit experiences, skills and relationships can only be built on the job (Arcodia, 2009). Staff members who have gained lots of tacit knowledge and experience become highly sought after in the industry, particularly in festival and event organisations as there is limited time to further develop skills and ‘know how’.

The QMF senior management team has acknowledged the importance of hiring experienced seasonal staff members, thus they knew ‘how to’ manage their workforce. Certain elements of jobs in festival management cannot be learned from textbooks, but rather need to be experienced and developed over time, as one of my participants highlighted: “*a certain amount came from the degree that I studied, but most of it is from hands-on, ground up work*” (interview, 05/06/11). Through on-the-job learning and therefore development of experiential ‘know how’, staff members develop skills, acquire tacit and relational knowledge and become professionals in their fields (Beaven & Wright, 2006; Junek, et al., 2009). Already having these experiences and skills is regarded as highly valuable, as “(…) many years of experience in the industry helps reduce operational and contextual uncertainty” (Larson, 2011, p. 301). At QMF having these experiences was an important selection criterion for new employees. One participant emphasised:

Actually ... the good thing about this festival is they (...) don't hire first-year-out-of-university people; they actually hire people with experience! Which means you probably have to pay more money for that, but in the long run ... things will go a lot smoother in the long run ... You know, everyone that leaves uni after first year thinks they know a lot, and that's true. They probably know a helluva more than me! But when it comes to experience, that's a different thing. And that's what it comes down to. (...) you can walk out of university and call yourself a “manager.” I would still not call myself a production manager NOW, because I don't think I've had enough experience. Where they would walk out of university as production manager ... well, you're not until you get so many years of experience, you're technically not. But because you have a piece of paper, you are! (interview, 07/06/11)

The participant acknowledged that a university degree can provide staff members with a lot of knowledge in their field. However, experience and the more tacit ‘know how’ can only be built over time and through practice. He was especially referring to the relational knowledge that cannot be acquired from textbooks but rather from experience and on-the-job learning (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Polanyi, 1966,

reprinted 1983). Staff members and festival management professionals who have acquired this 'know how' become highly employable in the industry. Thus it can be a challenge for festival organisations to attract and retain highly experienced professionals (Deery, 2009). At QMF, hiring professionals as part of their employment strategy was recognised by the senior management team as an important enacted practice of managing the workforce. Two of my participants said that within QMF they had the "elite staff" (interview, 02/06/11) and that, "they are stupendously good!!" (interview, 15/06/11). The language used by these participants demonstrates how the staff appreciated each other's strengths. Appreciation by the permanent staff, bringing out the best in people and inquiry into what works well for staff members can lead to staff satisfaction and thus retention (Anderson, et al., 2008; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003) which is crucial in festival organisations. Several participants mentioned that QMF was the festival organisation that "everyone wants to work for" (field notes, 09/07/11).

To summarise, QMF's relational approach to human resource management was highly effective. The two processes of recruiting and selecting staff members as well as developing new skills underpinned QMF's collaborative organisational culture. In turn I highlighted a practice-based perspective on human resource management as the context in which knowledge was relationally produced and embodied. Understanding knowledge management as practised and relational therefore emphasises how QMF's people and culture strategies constituted 'know how' that enabled the senior management team to effectively manage the QMF workforce. Not only were staff members selected based on their backgrounds and experiences, but also based on how well they worked together. Several informal approaches, such as on-the-job learning and job rotation, were then used to further develop these relationships and their shared understanding. Shared experiences and 'know how' enhanced knowledge creation and transfer within the organisation and particularly among the teams/pods. Senge (2006, p. 240) argued that through providing teams with opportunities to practise together and to share experiences they develop ways of learning and "learn how to learn together." The context in which employees practise knowledge moreover needs to be reflected upon in order to understand how an organisation can "(...) influence,

encourage (or perhaps inhibit) a culture facilitating implicit knowing and storytelling practices” (Küpers, 2005, p. 124). I made several stories about individual and team strengths within the complex festival environment explicit and identified how they contributed to building an appreciative culture. Within QMF, these knowledge practices were further underpinned by the creation of a unique organisational structure based around interdisciplinary pods, which I will now turn to.

### *5.3 Creating a Collaborative Structure*

Based on QMF’s people and culture strategies of recruiting and selecting staff members who work together effectively as well as constantly developing their skills, a collaborative structure has been developed emphasising interdisciplinary teamwork. In turn, this unique organisational structure contributed to staff members’ ‘know how’ in regards to sharing knowledge within and across the teams. The structure of an organisation is generally influenced by the organisation’s culture and emphasis on collaboration and innovation (Chen & Huang, 2007). A decentralised and more integrated organisational structure, for example, has a positive impact upon the organisational culture, communication, social interactions and therefore relational knowledge management (Chen & Huang, 2007; Gorelick, et al., 2004; McLean, 2005). In a decentralised and less hierarchical organisation, middle and lower level managers have the authority to make decisions for their teams or functional units, thus placing emphasis on knowledge creation and transfer within the teams (Mosley, et al., 2001; Werner & DeSimone, 2006). The exercise of power within the organisational arrangements and space thereby regulates and governs how knowledge is practised.

In the broader literature Albers and Brewer (2003) and Fenton and Albers (2007) highlighted the importance of group structures that focus on diversity among group members to enhance knowledge creation and transfer. Formal as well as informal groups, pods and communities-of-practice within an organisation are organisational structures that enhance relational knowledge management (Cabrera & Cabrera, 2005;

Fenton & Albers, 2007; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Szulanski, 2000; Wenger, 1998). Through the creation of these formal and informal groups, knowledge flows not only vertically, but also horizontally (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Due to their temporal and pulsating nature, however, festival organisations grow and contract quickly in relation to the stage of the event life cycle (Hanlon & Cuskelly, 2002; Van der Wagen, 2007). These changes in the organisational structure pose several challenges for the festival organisation in terms of team effectiveness and the continuous transfer of ‘know how’. Developing several long-term community projects across the entire state of Queensland further adds complexity to what QMF staff members are trying to achieve in their teams and with partners and members of the communities. From a more functionalist perspective on knowledge management, the structure of an organisation is understood as given and static. However, understanding both knowledge management and the structure of an organisation as dynamic and changing over time contributes to my discussion of knowledge as practised, embodied and relationally enacted.

Within QMF, teams and office space were designed in order to enhance collaboration and working together effectively as well as to break down the hierarchy and to grant pod members decision-making authority. Secondly, I identified how staff members not only performed their specific job roles but also embodied particular knowledge management roles and responsibilities within their teams. Both these practices contributed to staff members’ ‘know how’ that enabled effectively sharing knowledge among the team and collaboration. The success of knowledge management within the organisation depends on the relational performance of festival members effectively working with each other. Making explicit and appreciating their ‘know how’ of inter-subjective performance therefore forms the central argument of this section.

### *5.3.1 Designing Teams and Office Space*

In order to know ‘how to’ share knowledge within and across teams, QMF designed interdisciplinary teams of people who sat together in the office, thus sharing a space within which knowledge could be relationally practised. Diversity in terms of

backgrounds and knowledge within a team can increase the team's generation of new ideas and thus enhance creativity and innovation (Chen & Huang, 2007; McLean, 2005; Mosley, et al., 2001). Whereas a shared vision and understanding provides the basis for effective knowledge transfer, Ferran-Urdaneta (1999, p. 131) argued that, "the more homogenous the teams is [sic], the less effective it will be for knowledge creation." To increase innovation and the transfer of 'know how' across functional areas organisations can, for example, create cross-functional teams composed of a diverse group of people with different areas of expertise (Currie & Kerrin, 2003). In event and festival organisations, seasonal staff members are usually put together in teams around functional areas, such as technical staff forming a team and producers forming another team (Van der Wagen, 2007). An emphasis on functional teams, however, poses challenges on the effective transfer of 'know how' across the teams. Particularly when the tasks are complex, such as in the QMF community cultural development programs, teams of people with diverse backgrounds are more beneficial in terms of sharing knowledge effectively and efficiently than homogenous teams (Mosley, et al., 2001; Mulligan & Smith, 2006; Sonn, et al., 2002).

In this section I elaborate on the QMF pod structure. I highlight the importance of having interdisciplinary pods and at the same time employing several staff members who worked across these pods in order to ensure that the various projects fitted the overall aim of the organisation. Even though the QMF identity was vital for all pods in order for the organisation to have a shared understanding among its employees, each pod had also developed particular work practices and processes that differed slightly. I will point out some of these differences below, but will also demonstrate how each pod was characterised by a commonly shared culture, open communication and collaboration. Lack of a shared culture and open communication, on the other hand, would mean several teams/pods working independently yet without a common goal and purpose of what QMF aimed to achieve.

The QMF relational approach to human resource management and valuing tacit knowledge has led to a particular organisational structure that underpinned

interdisciplinary teamwork. Sharing expertise and information within and across teams formed important 'know how' constituted within the practice of designing interdisciplinary teams, as well as being able to combine different skills and backgrounds within a team (J. P. Lewis, 1998; Lindkvist, 2005). The collective knowledge of each team therefore was more than the sum of individual team members' 'know how' as they collaborated effectively (Peelle III, 2006; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Team synergy is regarded as important within innovative and collaborative cultures where synchronised efforts and creative solutions are aspired to (Harris, 1984). Synergy within QMF's pods was mainly the effect of pod members' shared and embodied knowledge as created in interdisciplinary relationships.

The QMF structure can also be described as relatively flat and decentralised which in turn enhanced knowledge sharing practices (Du Plessis, 2006). Based on the above discussion of having experienced professionals with different backgrounds working for QMF as well as the collaborative culture, this new and extremely functional organisational structure in pods emerged in recent years, yet it was taken for granted among the staff. I therefore saw my role as reflecting from the outside on the relationships between festival members as well as on the structure and space within which knowledge was practised and hence making the highly effective organisational structure explicit through my thesis in order for the QMF team to come to appreciate their strengths in working together (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999).

Within the QMF team, the 2011 permanent staff each held one major functional responsibility, including executive director, artistic director, finance and administration manager, program director, technical director, and marketing and development director. The seasonal staff were then set up in several 'pods', each consisting of a producer, a project coordinator and a technical manager as well as one or two secondments during the festival season. Each pod was responsible for a number of events with their own network of contractors, creatives and artists. Furthermore, there was a marketing professional associated with each event, thus the



different pods worked together with a centralised marketing team as well. The interdisciplinary pod structure is unique to QMF and quite different from the more traditional structure around functional areas usually found in festival and event organisations. The interdisciplinary pods, however, contributed to the development of a collaborative culture that enhanced knowledge transfer practices by emphasising the relational dimension of knowledge management. At the same time, throughout the knowledge transfer process pod members were able to translate different knowledges (artistic, technical, administrative, among others) and came to understand how their ‘know how’ contributed to the team. Oborn and Dawson (2010, p. 1836) argued that, “[c]onjoining expertise between colleagues from different backgrounds can enable novel ways of distinguishing and connecting ideas.” A member of one of the pods explained how they worked together as a team and how important it was to have teams of people with different areas of expertise. He also acknowledged and talked positively about his pod members’ strengths and knowledge, thus reflecting the key tenets of Appreciative Inquiry (Whitney, et al., 2010):

So the three people working together, me, Veronica and Claire ... there’s a lot of experience put together. Even she is young, but she’s done a lot of work. Which goes to how this organisation has done its set-up in the pods ... and you would have witnessed that. (...) the [other] festivals I’ve been to and worked with don’t do that. They seem to clump technical together, they seem clump producers together. Now, that makes absolutely no sense. If you drew that on a diagram, it makes no sense, because ... why? As a technical, I don’t need to talk to my other technical managers. I need to talk to my direct show! Our four shows, we talk together. If I need to get information from other technical managers, I stand up, walk over and talk to them. But more than likely, I will be talking to the other two people on my show (...) So, it’s a very good set-up in that way and not many people do that, which kind of shocks the hell out of me. (interview, 07/06/11)

As described earlier, staff members were not only put together in pods based on how well they worked together, but also how they complemented each other in terms of ‘know how’ and skills. Not only could knowledge be created and transferred within these pods effectively, as the participant above described, but there also were several QMF staff members who worked across the pods and therefore assured they all

worked towards a common goal and vision. Particularly the senior management team was responsible for the broad context of how the different projects fitted together. The program director, for example, reflected on herself as being responsible for linking the different projects together and providing advice as she had a broader understanding of the entire program rather than only four or five projects: *“It’s not so much that I am that more knowledgeable, but it’s often good—particularly if you are too deeply embedded in the project—to come to someone who understands it, but is slightly outside, to see how you can work through some of the issues”* (interview, 03/08/11). Furthermore, the logistics coordinator also worked across the pods and *“he might see a chance of car hire or something like that and can pick that up”* (interview, 16/08/11). Having these individuals working across the pods supported QMF in building cohesion across the entire program as well as seeing opportunities for collaboration between the pods, if necessary, thus constituting a ‘knowledge enabler’ (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007) and important tacit ‘know how’ that facilitated knowledge transfer within as well as across the pods/teams.

Staff members themselves also were aware of the different backgrounds that members of other pods brought in. Tom, for example, was one of the technical managers. He became excited when he told me about how his background was different from the other technical managers’ and how QMF’s pod structure enabled them to support each other across the pods:

Mark is smart when he hires people, because he hires people with different backgrounds as well. So my background is audio, Andy has a completely different background, Alex has a lot of facilities background, Nick has had a fairly vast background in lighting etc. So basically, you consult each other in the show as well. Someone would come up to me, like ... Alex would come up to me the other time for *Drag Queen’sLand*, and go “what do you think about the audio for this and blah blah blah and blah blah blah ...” And he has had a lot of questions about that. And in turn he might answer my questions about “what side structures should I do for this or what should I do on this side? Or is this possible?” Things like that (...) And hence why Mark puts people in that know different areas, like audio and lighting and site building, because you don’t know everything. And that’s how it should be! (interview, 07/06/11)

Tom first acknowledged the other staff members' knowledge and expertise, thus reflecting the ideas of Appreciative Inquiry where positively charged words and language are used to describe the best in people as well as the organisation as a whole (Whitney, et al., 2010). Anderson et al. (2008, p. 39) argued that:

“[a] paradox of appreciative organizing is: the more the focus is on the special nature of individuals in terms of their strengths, capabilities, and interests, the more they value the collective and are willing to strive for its well-being. The more people's strengths are enriched through being recognized by others, the more they realize they have resources to offer to the community, and they will do so.”

Acknowledging other staff members' strengths is therefore crucial for effective management; however, in the above statement Tom also identified the QMF pod structure as best practice in saying “that's how it should be.” Moreover, the story allowed Tom to communicate “(...) tacit knowledge about [his] perceptions, feelings, interpretations, values, strategies etc. in rich and meaningful ways” (Küpers, 2005, p. 120). He emphasised how having different areas of expertise covered not only within the pods, but also within the more traditional teams of producers and technical managers, helped staff members work on their projects and learn ‘how to’ share their knowledge effectively. He also reflexively identified his own role within the team by integrating external QMF practices “into [his] ongoing ‘story’ about the self” (Giddens, 1991, p. 54).

Within the pods staff members developed necessary ‘know how’ around their individual projects, while at the same time they could also consult other professionals outside their pod if necessary. In project-based organisations this interdisciplinary structure is quite common and a very effective way of sharing expert-knowledge within as well as across the teams and the organisation as a whole (Fong, 2005; Kodama, 2007). Despite commonly acknowledged similarities between event/festival organisations and project-based organisations, an interdisciplinary structure has not

yet been identified in festival organisations for knowledge to be practised effectively. I identified, however, how the QMF interdisciplinary team structure underpinned the relational and embodied processes of knowledge management rather than merely emphasising the pod structure as given and fixed.

The festival office was furthermore designed as an open office with only a few private offices and meeting rooms. The spatial design of the festival headquarters hence further contributed to knowledge being practised relationally as it was created with the relational complexity of QMF's projects in mind. Most staff members were located in the main room and sat together in teams or pods, so they could communicate easily (see Appendix 1 for a drawing of the office design):

Yeah, office set up like that one is really good for communication; you can easily hear what's going on. (...) It's good that the pods don't have dividers. It's easy to just say (...) "can you read this e-mail before I send it out and make sure you're okay with it?" (interview, 12/07/11)

In the interview, this seasonal staff member explained how they sat together in the pods and could easily overhear when their team members were talking on the phone or simply ask them a question whenever needed. The spatial dimension was regarded as important to enhance relational and interdisciplinary practices. Spaces are embodied and made meaningful through certain work practices. For example, open office designs provide different informal meeting places, such as around the photocopier machine or the kitchen, where employees can socialise and exchange knowledge and ideas (M. Earl, 2001; Zundel, 2013). The QMF spatial office layout therefore contributed to informal exchanges of information and knowledge and needs to be recognised as effectively playing a part in collaboration and practising knowledge management (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). The QMF space was structured in ways that enhanced both knowledge transfer practices as well as the collaborative organisational culture. The participant above, however, also mentioned that sometimes it was a challenge to concentrate when, for example, the team next to her was discussing an issue or celebrating an achievement. I noticed this as being

difficult too, when I was trying to focus on observing one particular event or team, yet at the same time lots of other things were going on with other teams in the office that seemed equally important.

As an ethnographer I was furthermore surprised by how little conflict I observed within the team, but instead rather the productive effects of power. I identified the spatial design of the QMF office as contributing to the collaborative culture that was practised within the team. Within the open office design staff members could not only listen to each other's conversations but also observe and watch each other work. Foucault (1977) used the idea of Bentham's panopticon to describe the 'surveillance' of people in spatial structures. He argued that for prisoners to be permanently visible, the effects of power are internalised as the possibility of surveillance is always present. The prisoners within this spatial design are constantly exposed and hence subject to certain behaviour. The QMF office was not designed for keeping staff members under surveillance and 'controlling' them, yet it did produce certain work practices and shaped interaction. By watching each other work under pressure, staff members gained an understanding of 'how to' behave, express their emotions and 'how to' effectively collaborate. At the same time, the office design helped create shared emotions among the staff too, particularly in regards to their excitement and pride in what they were doing.

Despite an overall shared understanding of the QMF identity, the pod structure has led to the creation of different work practices within each pod. Due to different personalities working together in the pods, each team has generated its own dynamic and hence influenced staff members' perceptions of how they belonged within the organisation and 'how to' perform their roles within the pods. I identified these differing relationships between each pod and the overall QMF vision and festival strategy:

Today I noticed that the way pod 1 members communicate with each other is quite different from the rest of the team. In pod 1 there are very comedian like characters who work together, they are loud and noisy and always up for a

laugh. Their way of communicating is quite intense; they don't bother if others can overhear conversations. Even when I am sitting with them, observing everything they do and listening to everything they say, they don't bother. Pods 2 and 3 are quite different, much quieter indeed. They seem to structure their way of communicating. Sometimes I see them gather in the meeting room to discuss recent issues (field notes, 05/07/11).

In terms of knowledge management it is important to recognise how the particular power and professional relations (Foucault, 1982; Leclercq-Vandelannoite, 2011) within each pod influenced pod members' understanding of the production of knowledge and engagement in knowledge practices across the organisation. In the above example, if one member of pod 1 would suddenly need to work with pod 2 or 3, the particular ways of working could pose challenges on both the individual and the team leading to the misuse of power. Within the broader QMF organisational culture the pods each had their own way of working together. However, the importance of collaboration and sharing knowledge within the group came forward in each of them. While there were minor differences in 'how' the pods approached certain elements of their projects, they all shared the overall QMF culture and identity. Some of the differences appeared in the distribution of tasks and job duties within each pod. While each pod member had certain responsibilities associated with his/her particular job (i.e., producer, project coordinator, technical manager), other tasks were handled differently within the different pods. Due to the busy work environment, however, at times all staff members needed to 'jump in' and help each other with certain issues.

As I described earlier, employing staff members with different backgrounds and expertise who can help each other not only within but also across the pods, if necessary, formed an important part of QMF's human resource management strategy. In my researcher role I also frequently 'jumped in' and helped out with small tasks that staff members were too busy to accomplish themselves, such as sorting fliers and posters, double-checking itineraries or entering new contact information into the database. Through listening to other staff members and observing them in their day-to-day tasks, I gained embodied 'know how' of working with others, particularly the

differences between certain pods/teams. I therefore experienced firsthand ‘how things are done within QMF’ which in turn enabled me to effectively work with others.

To summarise, the creation of a pod structure within the team underpinned the QMF collaborative organisational culture. Knowledge transfer was effectively practised not only within the different pods, but also across them as well as with the senior management team. The creation of interdisciplinary pods therefore constituted staff members’ ‘know how’ that enabled vertical as well as horizontal knowledge transfer (Chen & Huang, 2007; Mohrman, Cohen, & Mohrman, 1995; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). The practice also decreased the problem of knowledge hoarding in functional silos (Yang, 2007) as well as perpetuated appreciation of each other’s strengths and skills (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Furthermore, the decentralised structure and spatial design enhanced creativity and innovation, particularly when working on complex tasks such as the various community projects at QMF that required everybody’s input and ‘know how’ (Mosley, et al., 2001; Mulligan & Smith, 2006; Orlikowski, 2002). Rather than using the open office design as a tool for surveillance, power was productively produced by staff members watching each other work.

### *5.3.2 Identifying Knowledge Management Roles and Responsibilities*

Within the QMF team and pod structure in particular, I have identified several knowledge management roles that staff members embodied in their day-to-day practices. Making these roles visible contributes to QMF becoming explicit about their ‘know how’ of working collaboratively within interdisciplinary teams. Each member of an organisation has a particular role. Part of that role is defined in their job description; other features are implicit to the role. Knowledge management responsibilities are one example of implicit staff member roles. Each staff member employs certain knowledge management tasks and responsibilities, even though not explicitly stated. These responsibilities differ in regards to their jobs, membership in teams, and in festival organisations also regarding their status as permanent or seasonal staff members (Stadler, et al., in press).

In the knowledge management literature, the implementation of identified knowledge management roles and responsibilities within organisations has attracted attention in recent years (see for example, Burstein, Sohal, Zyngier, & Sohal, 2010; M. J. Earl & Scott, 1999, 2000; Gorelick, et al., 2004; Meyer, 2010; O'Dell, 2004). In this section I describe QMF staff members' implicit roles and responsibilities in terms of relationally practising knowledge management, which I have identified through my observations. I introduce the idea of having several "knowledge management champions and strategists" (Burstein, et al., 2010, p. 78) within the organisation who were responsible for a shared vision and strategy, and also explain the "knowledge broker" roles (Meyer, 2010, p. 118) that pod members at QMF employed. Furthermore I emphasise that all staff members at QMF could be regarded as "knowledge workers" (Burstein, et al., 2010, p. 78); they created and shared knowledge on a day-to-day basis and their input and insights were encouraged at all times in order to help the organisation stay innovative and competitive. None of these knowledge management roles, however, were explicitly stated and defined at QMF; they rather were an implicit part of the organisational culture and structure, particularly the pods. I will also describe the role of the board of directors as well as my own role as a knowledge management researcher. As the researcher with QMF I aimed to identify staff members' knowledge management roles and responsibilities and make them explicit because an explicit discourse about the practice of identifying knowledge management roles within QMF could further enhance professionalisation and contribute to staff members' 'know how' in regards to sharing knowledge within and across their teams.

When asked who they thought were the key people responsible for knowledge management within QMF, most participants named the executive director and/or a member of the senior management team. The senior management team was regarded as responsible for the longevity of the festival and thus holding the long-term knowledge: "*it's probably the people who are here all the way through*" (interview, 09/06/11). Some participants even mentioned that all of the senior management staff were key people for practising knowledge management within QMF, not merely the



executive director. Vicky, for example, enthusiastically told about all the amazing people working for QMF, thus appreciating her team members' strengths. The language she used ("amazing", "great", or "fantastic") highlights each staff member's individual areas of expertise:

*RS: So who do you think are the key people here for knowledge management?*

Lisa! She is number 1! She is amazing. She has worked in the arts for many years and she has done really big jobs. God, she knows a lot. (laughs) Especially when it comes to development, philanthropy, sponsorship, funding, grants ... she's just brilliant. She is extremely intelligent ... yeah ... And they've got some really great people here! Larry, he is amazing as well. He's got a lot of knowledge. Steve, he's got a lot of knowledge in terms of development. Peter too ... Peter has got a very good background in the arts, but he is fantastic at finance. And Maria ... Oh, amazing woman! Really, really amazing ... So they are all key, they really are! I hope they will never leave ... (interview, 02/06/11)

The senior management team's role within QMF can therefore be described as being similar to the role of knowledge management "champions and strategists" (Burstein, et al., 2010, p. 78). Usually knowledge management champions and strategists have some sort of vision for the organisation and are part of the senior management team. They are also responsible for designing knowledge management systems and practices, and act as role models in employing these relational practices and—if necessary—adapting them over time (Burstein, et al., 2010; Du Plessis, 2006). Furthermore, within QMF the senior management team also held knowledge about the broader vision, history and identity of the organisation. Maria, for example, saw knowledge about the broader context as an important part of her role: *"I think it's definitely my job to have an overview, not just of the actual program, but the way it fits into QMF's bigger role"* (interview, 03/08/11).

The senior management team then communicated some of the knowledge to seasonal staff members in their relevant areas. Here, the pod structure facilitated the process and practice of passing on knowledge and then sharing it within the pods. The senior

management team only needed to know ‘how to’ transfer knowledge relevant to each pod and their projects, rather than sharing everything with everyone. At the same time, pod members could bring in their own expertise and ‘know how’ and facilitate knowledge transfer between QMF and various contractors, artists and partners. I identified this practice as specific to QMF’s pod structure and saw my role in making explicit why it was working so well (Anderson, et al., 2008). The pods were further responsible to liaise between QMF and their partners and contractors in the different community projects. The producers, project coordinators and technical managers, who made up the pods, therefore, were an important link between QMF and these stakeholders. Within the team itself, it was their responsibility to know ‘how to’ implement QMF’s identity within the different projects and also know ‘how to’ work together with the senior management team, marketing team and several secondments and volunteers. One of the pod members described her role and job as follows:

My role is program coordinator. You just need to really know what’s going on in the community. Sort of my role has just been more of an organising, like you book travel and accommodation, you book hall hire, get the schedules, organise and you enter the costs into the budget and that sort of stuff. So you need to know how to use our accounting system, you need to know how to use Artifax [Event Management Software], you need to know how to enter things into the budget coherently ... You do have to get a bit of a hand on what’s happening in the local communities, cause that helps you to organise things. (...) And you do need people skills as well! Ahm, because people need to be able to approach you and you need to be able to approach people ... So we were just doing casting and rehearsals in Blackall. (...) we had our workshop leaders there, but ... I was just there to help facilitate and organise the photographer and just be there as a QMF representative. (interview, 09/06/11)

The staff member’s role as program coordinator was clearly defined. She was responsible for all the administrative issues associated with the projects her pod was working on, which relates to the QMF internal part of her job. At the same time, however, she was also self-reflexive about knowing ‘how to’ work with the communities as part of her role when she was out for rehearsals or workshops on her

own as the main QMF representative. She emphasised that people skills were an essential part of her role and being able to liaise between QMF and the community and artists. She therefore employed a 'knowledge broker' role even though she did not officially hold that title. She was not aware of her knowledge broker role, yet she knew her responsibilities and could manage them effectively. A knowledge broker's job is to "(...) move knowledge around and create connections" (Meyer, 2010, p. 118). It is the knowledge brokers' responsibility to facilitate information and knowledge creation and transfer within the organisation, as well as connecting people so that they can share knowledge. Knowledge brokers have a good understanding of the networks and links within an organisation as well as with partners, customers and other external bodies (Meyer, 2010), and therefore focus more on the practice of sharing knowledge through relationships rather than the technological dimension of knowledge management. Knowledge brokers are not necessarily senior managers, they can also be middle-managers, such as the pod members at QMF, with multiple knowledge brokers possible within an organisation (Meyer, 2010). Middle-managers therefore play an important role as they engage in vertical as well as horizontal knowledge transfer practices (Mosley, et al., 2001; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Their 'know how' of connecting different festival members as well as contractors and artists was crucial for QMF in regards to effectively sharing knowledge.

Finally, it is argued in the literature that all employees of an organisation can be understood as 'knowledge workers'. Knowledge workers create, share and use knowledge on a day-to-day basis (Burstein, et al., 2010). Everyone therefore plays an important role in knowledge management, because "[k]nowledge management cannot be supported by a single librarian or tech support with a toll-free number" (O'Dell, 2004, p. 24). Within QMF's collaborative culture, staff members were expected to willingly create, share and use knowledge. However, they were not aware of their specific 'knowledge worker' roles. To explain these roles within QMF, I will describe the approach QMF used in employing and working with secondments as an example. Secondments came on board three to four weeks before the festival started and were put into the different pods. Each pod therefore had two or three secondments as

assistants during the festival season. They sat together with their pod members and hence learned from them by listening, observing and communicating.

During lunch I get to talk to some of the secondments. They are all students. (...) One of them is currently working on all the itineraries, basically the job I have started in Artifax. She is now finalising and double-checking everything, so that the itineraries can be printed out as soon as possible. The other one is involved with one of the Brisbane projects. He is all excited about the rehearsal on Friday and the show on Saturday. Back in the main office, Tom gives his secondment an induction about where to find the production schedules and itineraries. Claire at the same time explains to her secondment that all the flights need to be double-checked for changes. It looks like the secondments now take over all the small jobs that are easy to explain, but take a very long time for the staff to complete themselves. (field notes, 13/07/11)

The secondments within the pods took on several small tasks and thus took some of the burden off of the staff. The pod members, as described in the field notes, can therein be seen as their mentors along the way as they were providing information and knowledge to assist them to learn ‘how things are done’ at QMF (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011; Kram, 1983). Mentoring, as discussed earlier in this chapter, further supported staff development and gaining new skills as well as learning ‘how to’ embrace QMF’s identity and values. Through the described mentoring practice, not only the permanent staff but also the seasonal staff and their assistants came to know ‘how to’ perform the implicit roles of ‘knowledge workers’ at QMF.

Based on participants’ statements as well as my observations, I have identified with a relational rather than technical focus how all QMF staff members and secondments performed their knowledge worker roles by creating, sharing and utilising knowledge on a day-to-day basis. Within QMF, the secondments’ involvement and input was highly valued, which was mainly achieved through the collaborative atmosphere that encouraged everyone to participate and share ideas, which in turn created new opportunities for QMF. One of my participants confirmed: *“I think, what's good about the team process here is that people share ideas and knowledge and out of that*

*process, you get these little nuggets of gold that turn into something like [the project in] Gladstone<sup>5</sup>!” (interview, 15/06/11)* The staff member reflected on the organisation’s strength in regards to the collaborative culture where every staff member was an important knowledge worker and therefore made explicit what was working well within QMF (Cooperrider, et al., 1995; Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). Making visible staff members’ knowledge worker roles further contributes to their understanding of ‘how to’ work together effectively and ‘how to’ share knowledge within QMF’s interdisciplinary teams.

Apart from the identified knowledge champion and strategist, knowledge broker and knowledge worker roles, in festival organisations the board of directors also plays an important role in maintaining a long-term strategy for the festival (Byrnes, 2003). The QMF Pty Ltd. under Australian law (Messenger, Richardson, & Butler, 2008) is governed by a board of six directors, including a chair and deputy chair as well as two sub-committees (personal communication, June 2011). Their duties include acting honestly and in good faith, as well as making adequate decisions for QMF as a whole. The board of directors is furthermore partly responsible for bringing in a different perspective on certain issues as well as carrying over some of the knowledge from one festival season to the next and to develop a long-term strategic plan for the organisation (Abfalter, et al., 2012; R. Brooks, 2005). Its knowledge management role is thus vital both in regards to strategic direction as well as operational management and thus must not be neglected but made explicit. Two of my participants explained:

I guess it’s also, as a board member you’ve got to be careful about how much you get involved. You don’t want to run the organisation. I suppose... I sit back and as a board member, I don’t have an enormous amount of knowledge about what goes on in the business on a day-to-day basis ... What I can do, I guess, is stand back, take a different perspective, advise, question, see opportunities for doing things a bit differently, and put that into the mix. But it’s not ... I don’t see that we are doing it as a hands-on role. And I don’t think that’s where I as a board member want to be positioned anyway. (interview, 22/06/11)

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<sup>5</sup> The project in Gladstone was not part of the 2011 festival season; but as one of QMF’s major and long-term community cultural development projects, it was at this point already in the making for the 2013 festival.

*RS: Do you think that the board is also responsible for retaining some of the corporate knowledge especially during the off-season?*

Yes! Look, it's a fascinating question that one ... because as you probably know, we've had this thing where we now put on a core team of people during the off-year. We haven't really had a satisfactory debrief, I don't think, about whether or not that has worked. Because it does increase the establishment cost and in an environment where you have to keep paying attention to the money, it's something that the board needs to look at. So I personally think that the business is transforming itself. And I think that we're starting to do more stuff in the off-year anyway, which means that the executive and management are there and there is more production in the off-year. I think, personally, for that to work, for us to retain a full-time core team through the off-year, we have to do more stuff in the off-year and have to get more funding for it. Cause otherwise your ratio is diluted and that doesn't help anybody. So I think to date that the board has been a core way of retaining that knowledge, but I don't necessarily think that that was the case last off-season. And I think it may ... you know, if this process continues, probably the role of the board in retaining knowledge in the off-year will go down. (interview, 15/06/11)

The recent changes and shift in governance of the QMF board of directors was part of the knowledge management success of the organisation. Previously, the board was partly responsible to carry over some of the day-to-day knowledge of the festival organisation, whereas now their role is more focused on the broader corporate and strategic knowledge. The QMF board of directors saw their role as advisors rather than in running the organisation; they therefore cannot be regarded as knowledge management champions and strategists, neither as knowledge brokers or workers. Rather, it was their role to advise and question corporate decisions and make decisions about the future of QMF. Their role was also perceived by staff members as being crucial, even though most of them did not directly work together with the board of directors.

I think our biggest challenge coming up really is the core team, one shouldn't forget, must include the board. Because the board ultimately are responsible for

the organisation. (...) their role in terms of knowledge management is crucially important! And we all need to share the same vision basically. (interview, 15/06/11)

The importance of including the board of directors in the knowledge management practices within QMF was identified by staff members as well as board members themselves. The governance role of the board of directors further includes gathering information, monitoring management and making suggestions (Byrnes, 2003; Calafato, 2011; Chong, 2010; B. E. Taylor, Chait, & Holland, 2005). Its implicit knowledge management role can hence be described as providing feedback and advice, as well as bringing in a different perspective on certain issues, in order to be able to make strategic decisions for the organisation. For any festival manager, it is crucial to critically sort through the board's suggestions in regards to how well they support the organisation's vision, as "[a]n organization that does not allow for input from the board (...) will probably become stagnant and dysfunctional over time" (Byrnes, 2003, p. 77). In the governance model used by QMF, knowledge sharing between the board and the executive team is vital for the long-term success of the festival. At least one member of the executive team was therefore present at the beginning of every board meeting and provided an update (personal communication, June 2011); the board however also had a "*quiet time*" (interview, 15/06/11) at the end of each meeting where they could discuss issues among themselves. Acknowledging the knowledge management role of the board of directors within QMF makes explicit the senior management team's understanding of 'how to' work together with the board of directors.

Finally, allowing an outside researcher to join the festival organisation for an extended period of time demonstrates how QMF members were open to another kind of knowledge management role. Meyer (2010) argued that a researcher can also act as a knowledge broker; however, I rather assumed the role of a 'knowledge management researcher' and at times facilitated reflection upon organisational practices. My role was not so much a brokering role, but rather through interviews and day-to-day discussion I created opportunities for staff members to reflect on what they were

doing and why. Through a reflexive process I was able to acquire organisational 'know how' myself and also to facilitate a degree of organisational learning through my involvement, which was also acknowledged by other staff members. My role as a knowledge management researcher was seen as important and valuable by staff members; they embraced my questions and thoughts and found it interesting to have someone around to help them reflect on what they were doing and why:

I think it's really interesting to have you here as someone to reflect to. (...) I think you've done a great job in terms of becoming visible and engaging with people. So well done! And I think for us, to have a moment every now and again to take that step back and reflect in this process, is really interesting. (interview, 15/06/11)

Particularly as soon as I had unconsciously adopted a method of asking mainly positively charged questions and therefore provided opportunities for them to tell stories about positive experiences and what they loved about QMF (Michael, 2005), I gave staff members a chance to "positively re-experienc[e] past successes" (Ghaye, 2010, p. 557). My knowledge management researcher role furthermore provided an opportunity to experience firsthand how staff members came to know 'how to' work together collaboratively and 'how to' share knowledge within their interdisciplinary teams.

To summarise, the scope of the above identified knowledge management roles did figure implicitly within the responsibilities of festival staff; however, they were not explicitly identified for each organisational position. Even though the permanent staff members were regarded as the key people responsible for relational knowledge management within QMF, there was potential for all individuals to contribute. Identifying knowledge management roles and responsibilities and making them explicit therefore contributes to staff members' 'know how' of effectively working together and sharing knowledge within and across the pods/teams. In this section I have shown that the QMF design of interdisciplinary pods was essential for connecting new and existing 'know how' (from contractors, artists and community



members) and building bridges between QMF and these key stakeholders as well as within the QMF team itself. The producers, project coordinators and technical managers who comprised the pods, can thus be regarded as ‘knowledge brokers’, even if the term was not explicitly used within the organisation. Moreover, I highlighted how every ‘knowledge worker’ at QMF played an important role in creating an innovative festival organisation and how the board of directors’ role was regarded as crucial in terms of bringing in a different perspective, advising and questioning what the organisation was doing. An explicit definition of knowledge management roles and responsibilities as suggested in this section can enhance professionalisation by emphasising staff members’ ‘know how’ of sharing knowledge within the team and working collaboratively. The practice further supports QMF in becoming a more self-conscious learning organisation (Getz, 2007; Larson, 2011).

#### ***5.4 Appreciating a Structure for Organisational Learning***

In today’s competitive environment, organisations only survive and grow if they are able to retain highly skilled and knowledgeable employees who are valuable to the organisation and its corporate memory (Nankervis, et al., 2011; Werner & DeSimone, 2006; Yahya & Goh, 2002). Strategic human resource management enhances an organisation’s capacity to become a ‘learning organisation’ (Gloet & Berrell, 2003). In festival organisations, however, most seasonal staff members move on to other festival or arts organisations once the festival is over and it can be difficult to retain a core team of people who are willing to come back every year for only a short period of time (Allen, et al., 2011; Deery, 2009; Van der Wagen, 2007).

I identified how QMF used a relational approach to human resource management valuing and appreciating collaboration and working relationships between festival members (Bandt & Haines, 2002; Nankervis, et al., 2011). Furthermore, QMF has embraced strategic human resource planning in order to enhance organisational learning and innovation. On the one hand, organisational learning was achieved

through rehiring individual staff members each festival season and therefore retaining some continuity and consistency among the team. Returning staff members could build on what has and has not worked in the past rather than reinventing the wheel each festival season. On the other hand, staff members at QMF were encouraged to not only perform their day-to-day jobs, but to also constantly think and reflect upon themselves as well as on how certain actions could be done differently and more efficiently in the future. In frequent informal conversations with permanent staff as well as with each other, seasonal staff members talked and reflected on what they were doing and why. They shared stories and positive experiences and at the same time together created new insights in regards to dealing with problems and challenges. Through these reflections, staff members not only contributed to QMF organisational learning over time, but they also developed self-knowledge of being authentic and true to themselves (Giddens, 1991) through “acknowledg[ing] their main weaknesses or strengths, their ways of coping with success or disappointment, and their pleasures or regrets over past decisions” (Townley, 1993, p. 536).

Within QMF, the emphasis on organisational learning, reflection and long-term planning has only evolved over the last few years. I will highlight below some of the changes in strategic planning, provide examples and make explicit how the organisation mainly emphasised learning from positive experiences. Learning from experience through reflection in turn constituted ‘know how’ that contributed to QMF’s success as a festival organisation.

Internally there have been some significant staffing changes for QMF in recent years, as discussed in the sections above. Stories about these changes shaped the festival discourses around how the core team worked together and what they have learned from the past. In 2006 there was not only a change in artistic directors, but also in the core team and a similar major change happened again in 2008. At that time, only two members of the staff remained, every other post was vacant. The vast corporate knowledge of QMF was in these two staff members’ hands. A new artistic and executive director were appointed by the board of directors and within a couple of

months a new team was created around them. This led to a very stressful and slightly chaotic festival season in 2009 as none of the new staff members knew what to expect and what their role in the organisation was.

I mean, when we got here in 2008, oh goodness! And I'm sure you heard that in other interviews too. It was like my goodness! But the glue that held it all together (...) was really Maria. Without Maria we wouldn't have had a festival last time. Because a) she's been through so many festivals, she said, "no, it will happen, don't you worry ... it's fine, we'll get there. It'll happen." You know, we were sitting there in September, actually we went into Christmas last festival ... that was really a miracle festival! We went into Christmas with 7500 dollars of sponsorship, we had a really strong support on Thursday Island, which was very surprising—we couldn't believe it, but the Premier said, "yeah, we'll do that" [support the project]. Ahm, but really we were screwed; we didn't really have a program or whatever. But somehow it just fell into place and we really had one of the best festivals ever last time. And one of the brilliant things about Maria going back to 2008, is (...) Because every time we were asking, "what do we do then ...?" she would pull out something and say, "this is what we do" And we were like, "where did she get that from?!" You know? That's really ... so she was the knowledge and the soul of the organisation. (interview, 05/08/11)

The danger of relying on one or two individuals has also been identified in the literature (e.g., Getz, 2002; Mules, 2004; Van der Wagen, 2007), as well as by QMF staff members as a key issue within the festival organisation through telling and re-telling the above story among the team. A shared narrative of what went wrong in the past further contributes to the organisational memory. However, the participant above mentioned not only the challenges that came with having a new team of people running the festival who had not yet established the necessary relationships and 'know how' that enabled collaboration; he also acknowledged and appreciated one staff member's strengths in remembering what needed to be done and 'how to' approach certain issues. His story featured the staff member's 'know how' and capacity to help others in a challenging situation. Sharing and re-telling the story helped other staff members understand and identify each other's strengths as well as to reflect (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003).

From this reflection on what organisational practices constrained and enabled them, a new human resource management strategy was created, as discussed throughout the chapter. The festival organisation was able to create a collaborative organisational culture and structure over time that was shared by the entire staff which in turn helped to counter the seasonality issue common to festivals and events. There was a strong narrative within QMF about consistency and continuity among the team being crucial for the long-term success of the festival. The stories about how difficult it was to run the festival without a shared understanding among the staff are crucial because, “(...) stories can provide a means of creating cohesiveness and shared understanding of goals and objectives” (Boone, 2001, p. 164). It is therefore important that staff and board members formally and informally share these narratives with newcomers to the organisation to continue the QMF story, as well as to appreciate and build upon their strengths in collaboration and knowledge sharing (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Not sharing these stories could lead to the staff reinventing the wheel each festival season. Küpers (2005) maintained that reflecting upon the context in which knowledge is embodied and narrated is crucial in order to make explicit the ways in which an organisation facilitates collaboration and story-telling practices. I identified and made visible QMF’s interdisciplinary team structure as the context in which tacit and narrative knowing was practised. An emotional attachment to ‘their’ projects and shared positive experience was vital within each pod and contributed to the productive use of power in working with others.

A crucial element of the long-term success of QMF was that each staff member not only understood his/her role and responsibilities within the organisation, but also employed reflexive thinking and a long-term planning strategy throughout the entire festival life cycle. The QMF interdisciplinary team structure and staff members’ implicit knowledge management roles thereby facilitated their self-reflection and learning from current relational practices. Despite the short timeframe and high workload, staff members consciously reflected on their self-identities as well as their actions and ‘know how’ of working together in group discussions or informal meetings. For example, during a meeting between the marketing team and a

contractor, one member of the team interrupted the meeting and raised a concern about one particular community. She later apologised for walking in and interrupting the meeting and together with the other marketing team members reflected on their way of working together. Staff members' respectful communication arising out of the QMF collaborative culture enabled conflicts to be managed well:

Back in the marketing office, I overhear a conversation between Lisa and Vicky. Lisa says she's sorry that she interrupted the discussion with her concern about this particular community. She didn't want to mess things up. But Vicky assures that it was a good thought and that she is grateful for Lisa's insights, because after all, everybody else simply forgot about that issue. They both agree that it is important for the team to raise these kinds of issues anytime if they want to work together effectively. (field notes 08/02/11)

Through reflection on current practices and strategic planning for future improvements QMF aimed for organisational learning and innovation (Carlsen, et al., 2010; Getz, 2007). A cycle of continuous improvement was aspired, especially in terms of team collaboration and knowing 'how to' work together effectively, as in the example above. Strategic planning with an emphasis on organisational learning is extremely difficult to achieve in festivals; usually, in festival organisations there is a tendency to think until the end of the festival and once it is over to start again from scratch. A long-term thinking strategy can only be achieved through the creation of an organisational culture and structure that supports new ideas and innovation and thus gives everybody the opportunity to contribute, a culture that was very well established within QMF. The combination of critically thinking about what worked well and what did not (reflecting) and forward planning on 'how to' improve these practices in the future constituted important knowledge practices within the organisation.

Providing opportunities for staff members to share ideas of what could be possible in the future while still working on present projects is essentially an Appreciative Inquiry approach to management (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). Instead of only performing their day-to-day jobs, QMF staff members in their teams and pods

constantly thought and reflected upon how certain actions could be done differently and more efficiently in the future, therefore highlighting and further developing their strengths (Ghaye, 2010; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). Two participants recounted:

You know, Peter and I are looking at the figures and we are saying, “okay, next time we are doing this, next time we are trying that ...” and we’re trying to—and I have to say Peter thinks about these things really deeply. He doesn’t have to just input data and solve problems, he thinks about solutions as he does that! (...) His insight is about how will we do this better, how will we make it work in the future (interview, 16/08/11).

And a lot of businesses have staff that come in and do the same thing Monday to Friday. Here it is a constant challenge to do better and to do something ... you know, even Peter is constantly thinking, how can we save a bit of money here, so we can spend a bit more next time? Or, you know, this is our new sponsor or supplier, so we’ll give him lots of work and they might sponsor us next year. So always thinking, “what is the next steps?” (interview, 02/06/11)

Continuous reflection on QMF practices and processes as described by these participants was employed throughout the entire festival life cycle. Strategic planning ‘know how’ was therefore regarded as crucial by the senior management team. In terms of knowledge management, forward planning enhances staff members’ ability to learn and improve their practices year after year, rather than reinventing the wheel each time (Allen, et al., 2011; Getz, 2007). Furthermore, the permanent staff can better understand each part of the process as well as pass on the relevant ‘know how’ to seasonal staff members according to their functional areas. In this regard, the QMF structure in interdisciplinary pods contributed to staff members’ ‘know how’ that enabled the transfer of team-specific and relational knowledge. Interdisciplinarity was regarded as an important knowledge enabler, yet QMF staff did not question the potential danger of groupthink within their pods and teams. Working together on a small number of projects over an extended period of time may lead to decision-making based on unquestioned unanimity and cohesiveness. Other symptoms of

groupthink include limited discussion of possible alternatives, failure to re-evaluate the original solution to a problem or selective bias (Hogg & Hains, 1998). Even though the different pods and teams had different ways of thinking and working together and frequently consulted other members of the festival on important issues in order to break away from their habits, being part of the broader 'QMF family' with a shared identity and values may lead to symptoms of groupthink over time. In turn, groupthink does not allow staff members to critically reflect upon their practices and 'know how'. Maintaining a vibrant democratic culture where staff members can have a say is therefore crucial for QMF in order to prevent groupthink. QMF members successfully practised this democratic culture in working with communities (see Chapter 6); my observations and reflections, however, have shown how they were also practising the same kind of culture behind the scenes.

Organisational learning is only possible if all staff members engage in reflexively managing themselves as well as in being reflexive about their practices in order to learn from what worked well and what did not (Argyris, 2004; Daudelin, 2000). Even if individual staff members moved on after the festival, they have shared their lessons learned with the permanent team through several informal conversations. Large parts of these reflections were also documented in reports or records. Seasonal staff members further were aware of the importance of sharing their 'know how' gained through the festival and felt comfortable documenting and sharing their insights with the permanent staff. Internal evaluation is an important part of knowledge management in festival organisations (Allen, et al., 2011; Prosser & Rutledge, 2003), and within QMF it provided an opportunity for the core team to capture some of the 'know how' gained within and across the various pods and teams, and therefore enhanced their 'know how' of possible improvements of work practices in the future. Formal as well as informal rituals, as described in Chapter 4, were also used to share certain practices and to identify the organisation's strengths through telling stories of positive experiences and what worked well throughout the festival season. Making visible from their different positions and knowledge management roles the practices and processes of creating and sharing 'know how' within and across the teams is crucial for the long-term success of the organisation.

The importance of self-reflexivity and reflection on organisational practices and issues provided a basis for QMF to learn as an organisation, particularly “through imagining what is possible in the future based on what has been most successful in the past” (Hart, et al., 2008, p. 637). Not only individuals and groups learn through this process (Hecker, 2012; Senge, 2006), but reflection is particularly important at the organisational level of learning in order for the organisation to stay innovative and competitive (Daudelin, 2000; Dixon, 1999). In my role as an ethnographic researcher and insider/outsider to the organisation, my reflections on the human resource management strategy and knowledge practices within QMF as described in this chapter also contribute to organisational learning. Making my observations and staff members’ tacit knowledge about human resource practices that underpin knowledge management processes explicit, provides a shared understanding and an opportunity for reflection on these mainly taken for granted practices. I highlighted how the QMF human resource strategy consisting of staff recruitment and selection practices, informal staff development processes and QMF’s unique interdisciplinary team structure, was developed to emphasise organisational learning. Regarding both the QMF human resource management strategy and their knowledge practices as fluid and dynamic highlighted how knowledge was enacted and embodied through collaborative work practices underpinned by an interdisciplinary team structure and space. The structure was thereby understood as relationally created and produced in order to reflect the complexity of the QMF environment in which staff members performed their roles. Reflection and an appreciation of their successful day-to-day practices, allows QMF to become a learning organisation.

### *5.5 Summary*

Understanding human resource management as disciplining “the interior of the organization, organizing time, space, and movement within it” (Townley, 1993, p.



526) and constituting a discipline and discourse was crucial for knowledge practices within QMF to be made explicit. Human resource management and knowledge management efforts within an organisation need to be aligned in order to be effective and successful (Currie & Kerrin, 2003; Gloet & Berrell, 2003; Yahya & Goh, 2002). However, in festival and event organisations effective human resource management can be a challenge, as the organisation expands and contracts quickly throughout the festival life cycle (Hanlon & Cuskelly, 2002; Van der Wagen, 2007). The QMF team have therefore created a unique pod structure emphasising interdisciplinary teamwork and collaboration among the staff. The structure and space within which knowledge was practised, however, were not regarded as given and fixed but rather as produced and relationally created. I have demonstrated how the spatial open-office design supported collaboration and working together effectively, but could easily lead to surveillance and the misuse of power. Regarding knowledge as practised within this structure and as embodied by staff members working together in pods and teams highlighted the dynamic and relational nature of both knowledge management and human resource management in festival organisations.

QMF's human resource management practices were understood in terms of their relation to the collaborative organisational culture and how they influenced this culture in return, rather than merely interpreting job descriptions and employment contracts. I have demonstrated how within QMF the aim was to have several teams who shared a passion for 'their' projects and to have individual team members who complemented each other in terms of 'know how,' skills and backgrounds. Through a human resource management strategy that emphasised teamwork and working relationships between festival members, an organisational structure was created that supported interdisciplinary team collaboration and relational knowledge management (Chen & Huang, 2007; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). The embodiment of several implicit knowledge management roles and responsibilities by staff members and the board of directors further contributed to their knowing 'how to' effectively work together and share knowledge within the team.

The organisation's decentralised structure and emphasis on self-managed teams further supported creativity and innovation through allowing staff members to reflexively organise their self-identities and to share ideas and experiences in internal relations (Giddens, 1991; Orlikowski, 2002). Formally and informally sharing these insights is also crucial in working with different communities. In the next chapter I will elaborate on knowledge practices regarding working with communities in external relationships and co-creating performances with them.

## Chapter Six: Appreciating Co-Creating Knowledge Practices

### STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION TO CO-AUTHORED PUBLISHED PAPER

This chapter includes parts of a co-authored paper in section 6.2 and 6.3. The bibliographic details of the co-authored paper, including all authors, are: Stadler, R., Reid, S. & Fullagar, S. (2013): An ethnographic exploration of knowledge practices within the Queensland Music Festival, *International Journal of Event and Festival Management*, 4(2), 90-106

My contribution to the paper involved: the provision of the data, preliminary analysis of the data into a usable format and providing direction on the scope and structure of the analysis and publication.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Raphaela Stadler

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Simone Fullagar

## ***6.1 Introduction***

In the previous two chapters I have explored the construction of the QMF identity and organisational culture, as well as internal structures that underpin effective knowledge management practices within the organisation. I now turn to a complementary focus on knowledge management practices that concern the organisation's relationships with external communities. Extending my analysis of the QMF identity and community cultural development ethos described in Chapter 4, I now identify how knowledge practices were performed by festival members in working with members of diverse communities. Creating a working partnership between the festival organisation and the community is a key element of community festivals and community cultural development programs (Adam & Goldbard, 2001; Jepson, et al., 2013). Festival staff and community members partner to co-create projects; 'know how' that enables them to work together over a long period of time is vital for the success of these projects. Without a creative partnership between festival members and members of the community the projects would most likely fail. Learning to trust and understand each other takes time, and festival staff members meet frequently with members of the community to discuss and negotiate the process of creative development (Hager, 2008). In order for knowledge creation and transfer to be practised effectively, including all key people in relationship building and knowledge sharing activities such as face-to-face communication and meetings is crucial (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). The long-term planning strategy necessary in community cultural development, however, counteracts the short-term nature of festivals and creates several knowledge management challenges for both staff and community members.

The QMF team has learned over time that understanding the principles of community cultural development projects is crucially important for their success. Building strong relationships with community members were among the key values embodied by staff members and were regarded as essential in the creative development process. QMF staff placed great importance on establishing social relationships through face-to-face

communication with members of the communities. The practice allowed them to “constitute a sense of knowing their colleagues, of knowing their credibility in and commitment to specific issues, and of knowing how to collaborate with them” (Orlikowski, 2002, p. 259). The QMF staff knew that they could not simply go in and ‘do’ a performance with the community. Rather, a community cultural development ethos requires projects that are collaboratively developed over a long period of time; strong partnerships and relationships have to be built and maintained in order to gain the community’s support and approval of the piece (Bramham, 1994; Hager, 2008). The QMF staff were therefore engaged in highly complex processes of building and maintaining strong working relationships with members of different communities, as well as co-creating performances with them throughout the entire festival life cycle. They identified with the importance of what QMF was aiming to achieve and were highly invested in creating successful projects over an extended period of time.

My practice-based understanding of knowledge management (Corradi, et al., 2010) within QMF emphasises the community cultural development ethos which shaped festival members’ engagement in various activities and relationships. Community cultural development is still under recognised in the festival and events literature, despite recent trends in research on community engagement and the social impacts of community events (for a summary of research trends see Mair & Whitford, 2013). In this chapter, I therefore highlight community cultural development as a particular practice in festival management. I specifically emphasise the “powerful historical, embodied, emotional and social relations” (Küpers, 2005, p. 118) through which ‘know how’ that enabled the co-creation of performances was produced and shared between festival members and members of the communities. Shared stories and individual narratives will be presented as a means through which festival members created and performed their own, as well as QMF’s identity, and learned ‘how to’ work with members of different communities. Hence, I argue that in festival organisations merely documenting explicit information is not enough, equally important are stories and narratives that highlight the complex relationships through which ‘know how’ is practised. Recognising the importance of telling multiple stories within QMF contributes to my emphasis on knowledge as being storied, embodied

and practised through relationships both internal and external to the organisation. I will also demonstrate, however, how a “grand narrative” (Boje, 1995, p. 1000) of what QMF is and aims to achieve is an exercise of power that could potentially lead to truth claims and hence the misuse of authority and control by management. For example, Clarke and Jepson (2011) investigated a community festival organisation and found how non-inclusion and little democracy throughout the planning process led to unequal distribution of power and authority. In their case study, the festival Steering Group was left with full control over the program and strategic direction of the festival, despite its emphasis on “embrac[ing] all sections of the community” and “celebrating multiculturalism and diversity of the city” (p. 16). The empowering discourse of QMF’s community cultural development ethos could potentially create similar issues, as I will critically investigate.

Below I will describe the practices, activities and forms of ‘know how’ constituting community cultural development using the *Behind the Cane* project as an example. I will also demonstrate how staff members engaged in these practices within the *Drag Queen’sLand* project to draw out similarities and differences between the two community arts projects and how they shaped new knowledge creation and transfer practices as well as organisational learning. The first practice, which I call building relationships of trust and respect, was comprised of three embodied activities that festival members engaged in: identifying gatekeepers, practising respect and understanding the power of the story. In turn, these activities contributed to festival members’ understanding of ‘how to’ approach members of the community and what the story means to them. The second practice, co-creating performances, emphasises the community cultural development principles and activities of working professionally, collaborative decision-making, understanding and representing ‘others,’ mentoring community members as well as dealing with conflict. Through engaging in these activities, festival members came to know ‘how to’ work *with* the community, ‘how to’ implement QMF’s community cultural development ethos and ‘how to’ negotiate power to create positive effects.

The following table, adapted from Orlikowski (2002, p. 257) provides an outline of the chapter and summarises the repertoire of practices which I aim to make visible as well as several activities (tacit knowledge) comprising each practice. The knowing constituted in each practice emphasises why it was important for staff members to critically reflect on what QMF is doing well in regards to the embodied micro practices of knowledge management within their community cultural development projects.

<b>Practice</b>	<b>Activities Comprising the Practice (Tacit Knowledge)</b>	<b>Knowing Constituted in the Practice</b>
Building relationships of trust and respect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying gatekeepers</li> <li>• Practising respect</li> <li>• Understanding the power of the story</li> </ul>	Knowing how to approach the community
Co-creating performances	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Working professionally</li> <li>• Collaborative decision-making</li> <li>• Understanding and representing ‘others’</li> <li>• Mentoring community members</li> <li>• Dealing with conflict</li> </ul>	Knowing how to work <i>with</i> the community (CCD principles)

Table 5: Practices, activities and knowing within QMF’s community projects (adapted from Orlikowski, 2002, p. 257)

The storied and embodied knowledge practices identified in this chapter enhanced organisational learning for QMF as a whole. In the final section I will therefore summarise and elaborate on the processes and practices of story-telling (Snowden, 1999) within QMF through which positive experiences about each community project were shared within the team. The two projects *Behind the Cane* and *Drag Queen’sLand* were created following the same principles, yet the knowledge practices and challenges QMF staff members had to face with each community were different. Therefore, continuous learning not only for the communities but also for festival members as self-reflexive subjects, the different teams, pods and QMF as a whole was achieved through telling and re-telling stories about ‘how to’ work with others and ‘how to’ represent the community in the projects. Identifying and appreciating positive stories contributes to the success of QMF and creates a shared vision for

future learning (Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003; Whitney, et al., 2010). Making explicit through my ethnographic research approach festival members' perceptions, positive experiences and the tacit knowledge around creating community cultural development pieces therefore makes visible festival members' highly complex yet taken for granted knowledge practices of working *with* community members over an extended period of time (Geertz, 1973; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003).

## ***6.2 Building Relationships of Trust and Respect***

In community events and festivals according to Gibson and Connell (2012, p. 81) it is important to recognise that, “[r]elationships are generally bi-directional and they rely on mutual trust”; they are crucial for credibility and success and they provide opportunities for learning and gaining skills. Initial rapport has to be established with certain members of the community who may act as gatekeepers. Strong relationships with these people based on trust and mutual respect of cultural differences then need to be maintained throughout the entire creative development process (Adam & Goldbard, 2001; Phipps & Slater, 2010). QMF staff members came to know ‘how to’ approach gatekeepers through three key practices of building relationships with community members. I aim to make them visible by highlighting festival members’ strengths (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003) in engaging in community cultural development knowledge practices: first, staff members identified certain gatekeepers or important members of the community. Second, every staff member and member of the creative team practised respect in approaching the community throughout the entire creative development process. Finally, staff members needed to understand the power of the story and emotional attachment for the community in order to work together effectively. Continuously engaging in these activities for QMF staff members meant learning ‘how to’ approach key members of the community.



Making explicit the taken for granted activities and practices of approaching the community is the central theme of this section; I particularly highlight the embodied and storied knowledge practices within QMF's community cultural development ethos by recounting various events and successes, as well as festival members' and my own experiences. These thick descriptions (Geertz, 1973) provide an understanding of the complex context within which 'know how' was practised rather than merely a documentation of explicit information and knowledge (Küpers, 2005).

### *6.2.1 Identifying Gatekeepers*

An important dimension in community cultural development projects is building strong relationships with certain community members who may act as gatekeepers. Support from these key people enhances festival staff members' understanding of how things work locally (Mulligan & Smith, 2006). In initial meetings with members of the community, ideas and knowledge are exchanged and trust is built between the festival organisation and the community. Gibson and Connell (2012, p. 90) argued that,

“[m]usic festivals, like any festivals, may promote social cohesion and a sense of belonging, but may just as easily alienate local people and discourage their participation. Much depends on the nature of the festival (and even its timing), the organisational structure and goals, and how it is first introduced and organised.”

QMF in particular faced the challenge of having different community projects with different local communities each festival season. Each of these projects needed to be introduced and organised following the community cultural development principles of collaboration and community engagement (Adam & Goldbard, 2001). I therefore identified how initial meetings with a broad range of community members were an important practice for QMF staff members who met with key people face-to-face, as one participant described:

It's really hard [managing relationships with communities]! I think ... the first thing I'll say is that there is NO substitute for getting out there and going to visit people and looking them in the eye, shaking their hand and saying, "We are going to do this." Making promises that you keep. (interview, 15/06/11)

The participant talked about how staff members followed the values, principles and vision of QMF in approaching members of the communities and meeting with them. The practice required the QMF team to travel to each community several times and meet with them face-to-face in order to ensure the projects were grounded in real community concerns. Merely discussing their ideas over the phone would not be enough to gain the communities' support. As the participant described, it was crucially important to develop friendships with members of each community; staff members embodied tacit and taken for granted practices such as "looking them in the eye and shaking their hand" as part of this process.

In regards to QMF's long-term strategy, identifying gatekeepers in each community was crucial, as all communities and their local practices were different. Without the gatekeepers' support QMF could not develop successful performances with them. In the case of *Behind the Cane* particularly the elders of the community needed to be approached first, as one participant stated:

First thing that has to happen is to have the community approve of it! And that goes through people like Elizabeth or Caroline and the elders in this particular community. (...) You can see the friendships that we've developed are the most important thing. (interview, 29/06/11)

Acknowledging the important role of the elders in the community was crucial for QMF in order to gain their approval for the project. Furthermore, in regards to knowledge the elders in a community are usually highly experienced, have a variety of stories to share and may even act as mentors for younger community members (Whitney, et al., 2010). QMF members appreciated the elders' roles, listened to their stories and understood the importance of building strong relationships with them.

Through this relationship building process QMF members created friendships, trust and an open atmosphere where ideas and stories could be shared and the more traditional status hierarchy could be broken down (Gardner, Gino, & Staats, 2012; Thomas, et al., 2001; J.-K. Wang, et al., 2006). QMF staff members gained ‘know how’ about key people in the community as well as ‘know how’ that enabled them to approach and work with them. The value of establishing friendships was thereby acknowledged as vital in the context of relationships between community members and professionals. Appreciating the relationship building process as well as the already existing relationships within each community (Whitney, et al., 2010) was thus an important part of this knowledge practice.

For the *Drag Queen’sLand* project, QMF used a similar process of building relationships with the Brisbane drag community to gain their approval, trust and support and to ensure they ‘owned’ the piece. One participant talked about the initial contacts she made with the community and careful process of approaching them:

First day I arrived, I started ringing drag queens, literally... and looking them up on Facebook. That’s where I started which is kind of random but it seemed like the easiest place to start. And also not only was it just finding the drag queens, but it was also connecting to the venues where they perform, and to their networks, and liaising with the people in those networks, getting them to support the project and know that we were doing it - again - with integrity and authenticity. And that it was about a real portrayal, not something frivolous or taking advantage or anything like that. So lots of the networks that we liaised with came on board as supporters or sponsors or whatever. (interview, 16/08/11)

In this story, the participant highlighted how it was clear from the beginning that the project needed support not only from drag queens themselves, but from a much broader network of people. The QMF team had to build and maintain professional relationships with all of them throughout the process. In approaching the gatekeepers of the drag community, the staff member provided as much information about the project as possible and explained how QMF was going to “honestly represent” the community in the show in order to gain their support for the piece. Once the artists

came on board, these gatekeepers and important members of the community became crucial in terms of liaising between drag queens, QMF and the professional artists. Another staff member working on the *Drag Queen's Land* project further highlighted that throughout the process of meeting and negotiating with a lot of different people, certain members of the community became more involved than others:

So I set up a lot of meetings with the writers and the director and myself. And we met lots and lots of people. Throughout those initial meetings last year, in 2010, that's where the strong kind of contributors came out of those meetings. Because it was some really ... everyone was positive, but there was some really enthusiastic people, who wanted to participate, who were very like, "anything you want, we really want to be part of it." That was terrific. And some of those people stayed with the project right to the very end! To my great joy, because it was good to always have them as a benchmark to put things in front of them (interview, 16/08/11).

The participant explained how getting to know the people in the community was a crucial part of building relationships with them and gaining their support for the project. The embodied 'know how' of approaching community gatekeepers was hence made explicit by recounting her narrative. By listening and observing others and over time developing her own experiences of working with others, the staff member had learned 'how to' provide details of the project in order for community members to feel safe to speak up and share their experiences and opinions. Particularly staff members' emotions, empathy and listening skills that embraced a relational stance were part of their tacit 'know how' of working with members of the community. Through these processes they aimed to share power and authority rather than imposing their own ideas 'over' the community. Making explicit the embodied and taken for granted approach QMF staff members used in identifying gatekeepers was an important part of my researcher role by highlighting and affirming what they were doing well (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Whitney, et al., 2010).

Community cultural development projects need to be "owned" by the local community (Kay, 2000, p. 423) in order to be effective and valuable and to create a

collective identity among community members. Terracini (2007, p. 24) maintained that, “[i]f the work you create is not intrinsically connected to the culture of that place, it will not resonate.” For QMF staff members it was therefore important to learn about different local cultures. The above described activities hence informed festival members’ ‘know how’ of approaching gatekeepers. In both projects, face-to-face meetings were important in terms of getting to know each other and coming to know ‘how to’ collaborate and co-create the performance.

### *6.2.2 Practising Respect*

In community cultural development projects, approaching the community with respect is an important element of relationship building (Phipps & Slater, 2010; Yoder, 2004) and an ongoing practice for QMF staff members—from initial meetings with gatekeepers of the community all the way through the creative development and rehearsal period. All festival members needed to know ‘how to’ approach different community members based on the values of the organisation. QMF members achieved this by showing respect and “instituting the practice of relating to others in ways that reconstitute power relations in more egalitarian ways” (Boreham & Morgan, 2008, p. 80-81). The importance of going into a ‘new’ community with the utmost respect as well as learning about their culture and history was therefore communicated within QMF quite frequently. As the researcher I aimed to make visible how staff member practised respect in meeting with different members of the community, an important process in order for them to come to understand practising respect as a knowledge enabler (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007).

One participant described the research process QMF staff members engaged in and how they collected some initial stories. They then introduced a first script of *Behind the Cane* and ideas for specific songs in a meeting with the elders of the community:

We sort of sit in front of them and say “okay, fellas ... this is what we have, this is what we’re going to do, the story, the set ...” and we tell them the story and play them the songs. And they sit there with their eyes closed and arms fold, listening very carefully and then they go “okay that sounds good ... Is this going

to happen?!” And we confirm, “yeah, it’s going to happen.” (laughs) And again, “oh good ...” (nodding) So that’s kind of an ongoing process. (interview, 29/06/11)

The practice of meeting members of the community with respect and sharing ideas and knowledge with them enhanced building relationships and mutual understanding. A potential danger is that, “formal knowledge of professional disciplines shapes the way human institutions are organized and (...) this form of normalization is a central instrument of professional power” (Oborn & Dawson, 2010, p. 1854). However, QMF staff members aimed to not exercise power ‘over’ the community in the meetings. In line with the principles and values of the organisation, QMF staff were not acting as professionals and imposing a hierarchical authority ‘over’ the community, but rather engaged in practices of regarding members of the community as co-experts in these meetings, valuing their input and ideas and aiming to make their stories and voices heard. Power thus needs to be understood as dynamic and produced from one moment to the next (Foucault, 1978; Rouse, 2006), constantly circulating between QMF and the community, rather than merely possessed by QMF. The QMF team has learned over time that they needed to approach the community in initial meetings by ‘not knowing anything’ and therefore giving members of the community an opportunity to share their stories, make their voices heard and to take on the position of ‘experts’. Appreciating the ‘not-knowing’ approach to getting to know community members opens up new possibilities for creativity and an interest in others’ ideas that in turn may create new knowledge (Anderson, et al., 2008).

The community, in turn, supported QMF not only because of the excitement of creating a performance but also because of QMF staff members’ embodied and professional ‘know how’ of approaching them with respect for their own expertise. Throughout the process of working with members of the community, I noticed that QMF staff adopted a relational stance that emphasised learning from others rather than ‘knowing’ it all as professionals. Community members were regarded as experts in relation to their own stories and traditions, whereas festival staff members provided the professional framework within which these stories could be performed. Thus they

were engaging in an Appreciative Inquiry approach that emphasises making all voices heard and together creating “what could be” (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007, p. 71). One member of the community, for example, told me in an informal conversation that, “*QMF try their best to represent the community. (...) They don’t mind putting themselves in the background*” (field notes 28/06/11). Several other interview participants further emphasised that QMF provided the ‘framework’ for their community arts projects, but the community provided the ‘stories’. Therefore, the professional relationship between QMF and the community can be described as a ‘partnership’ that was built through initial meetings and later maintained throughout the creative development process. The QMF identity of being a transformative festival as described in Chapter 4 thereby framed how festival members interpreted their own ‘know how’ to approach community members with respect and negotiate performances with them.

Staff members shared stories of how they approached certain community members and built new friendships before starting the process of developing a performance with them. Story-telling as a knowledge sharing practice (Boje, 1991; Snowden, 1999) was regarded as crucial yet taken for granted not only within QMF but also between QMF and members of the communities. Hearing some of these stories in informal talks and interviews with staff members made me realise that I needed to be careful during my research process. Particularly when I went to Bowen for the first time, I was quite nervous and anxious about ‘how to’ approach members of the South Sea Islander community. I had become an insider to QMF at this point, yet remained an outsider to the local community. However, I had learned from listening to and observing other staff members that showing respect was crucial; hence I had gained embodied ‘know how’ that enabled me to approach members of the community. In my field notes I described one such situation:

I join Elizabeth in the back of the room and start talking to her. At some point Jenny comes over and wants to know whether I had informed this community member about what I am doing. It seems like she wants to make sure that Elizabeth is comfortable talking to me. I assure her that I’ve informed everyone

about my research project and that there are no secrets. Jenny seems relieved.  
(field notes, 28/06/11)

Telling this member of the community about my research project and my role with QMF was essential in building trust. I approached her with respect and also mentioned some of the positive stories I had already heard about *Behind the Cane* from other QMF staff members, yet at the same time gave her a chance to tell her own story without imposing my perspective and ideas upon her. I thought this would be a good way to make her see I had done my research on the story and that I was serious about it. I experienced firsthand ‘how to’ practise respect as a QMF representative. After our initial conversation, however, it turned out that my fears were unfounded. Most members of the community were welcoming and excited to meet me. The experience, nevertheless, was important for me to understand the mainly tacit relationship-building process that QMF members had to go through when creating projects with new communities, because “*you don't want to step on anybody's toes, but you need to kind of feel the waters and where to go*” (interview, 16/08/11). Through the experience I was hence able to make explicit and affirm the taken for granted practices QMF members engaged in. It turned out that some QMF staff members and members of the creative team had a similar experience when they first arrived in Bowen:

We felt that too when we first came up here. We looked at protocols and how do you approach people. And the first person we met was Caroline and it was so funny. She just came out and hugged us. And then we went to her place for dinner. (interview, 27/07/11)

I'm not going to lie. I'm going to say I was nervous about being disrespectful. I wanted to approach the community with the utmost amount of respect for the story and the people. And I'm a city boy from Brisbane, so I did a lot of research. I asked (...) to give me as much information on the “white” history of history. And they did. They gave me DVDs and books to read. So that I was really up to speed on the history; so that I was aware of *how* to talk to people. But you know what? All of those conceptions that I may have had of who this



community was before I got here, all went out the window, when I saw their amazing smiling faces!! (interview, 30/06/11)

The two participants joined QMF and the *Behind the Cane* team at different points in time. One of them was involved in collecting stories from members of the community; the other only became part of the team once rehearsals started. Both however, aware of the QMF values and community cultural development principles, engaged in similar practices in terms of approaching South Sea Islander community members with respect and getting to know them. The first participant also highlighted the importance of being invited for dinner at the community member's home, a ritual which enabled them to get to know and trust each other and to learn 'how to' collaborate. Informal rituals as described in Chapter 4 were hence also crucial means of practising knowledge in external relationships. The practice of approaching members of the community with respect, as described by both participants, required staff members to be culturally aware and to understand the different dimensions of working with and knowing others in order to be able to create partnerships in the process. Especially in a postcolonial nation like Australia (Slemon, 2001) where ('white') staff members have a different background and cultural understanding from South Sea Islanders, this might even lead to oppressive relations if not appropriately addressed and delicately dealt with. Failure to engage in the practice of approaching community members with respect could therefore easily lead to QMF staff members exercising power 'over' the community and losing their support for the project.

In some cases it was difficult for QMF staff members to find the proper way of approaching certain members of the community. However, a sensitive approach was practised of first consulting with key members and gatekeepers, asking them for help and ensuring that all protocols were followed before approaching other community members. This was very much the case with the *Drag Queen's Land* project, as one participant told:

One of the guys who was from the community - he wasn't a drag queen himself, but represents drag queens like a manager - he was incredible, amazing! (...) He

was amazing because, he was kind of my pit stop between everything. So when we would move into exploring something or we had questions about something or weren't sure about something, I would always go to him first and discuss it with him. And then we would talk about who else we needed to consult and bring on board. He would do some of that on behalf of me or connect, hook me up with people. So he did a lot of that, it was like the door into the right people to make sure that we were not offending anybody, that we hadn't forgotten anybody or left anybody out, that we'd ticked off the appropriate protocols in regards to dealing with the community and stuff. I don't think I could have done it without him actually. I was very grateful. (interview, 16/08/11)

The story told by this participant demonstrates how staff members paid attention to following the protocols and practised approaching all members of the community with respect. In the case of *Drag Queen's Land* none of the staff members had direct connections with drag queens before working on the show; however, they identified gatekeepers and key people within the community who were then frequently consulted before approaching drag queens or other members of the community. The practice of partnering with the community, respecting their different culture and traditions was one of the taken for granted values of QMF and applied to all major community projects. Making visible how the QMF staff engaged in the practice through my reflections is therefore crucial in order for them to be able to reflect on what they were doing well and why. The practice of approaching members of the community with respect in turn constituted valuable 'know how' that shaped working relationships between QMF staff and community members.

### *6.2.3 Understanding the Power of the Story*

Community cultural development projects are often produced around oral histories and may therefore act as reminders that evoke intense feelings and emotions (Adam & Goldbard, 2001). Lupton (1998) maintained that especially for marginalised communities, certain objects of memory can help them create a sense of 'home' and belonging. The story of *Behind the Cane* can be regarded as such an 'object' evoking emotions that aimed to maintain certain continuity with South Sea Islanders' previous

lives and identities. Slemon (2001, p. 111) further argued that it is crucial to understand these South Sea Islander community members as “subjects of their own histories, and not as passive figures in the burgeoning history of others.” Following the ‘grand narrative’ and QMF vision of being a transformative festival, staff members needed to understand and appreciate multiple stories within each community. Lack of community involvement and too little a democratic approach to this process could easily lead to the misuse of authority and control enacted by QMF members over the community (Clarke & Jepson, 2011).

*Behind the Cane* in particular was a very emotional story for both cast and audience. On the night of the first performance, two very memorable moments came through for me personally, that showed the emotional effect of the story:

The governor also said something beautiful after the show. There is a scene where Tamara sings about her lost son and says something like “the sea breeze in my face is like your breath.” The governor said that right at this moment last night, there really was a breeze coming from the sea and the entire audience could feel what Tamara was singing about. It still gives me goose bumps when I think about it ... (field notes, 28/07/11)

The finale song featured all the main family names of South Sea Islander community members in Bowen and a refrain was sung by the entire cast:

*We won't forget you;  
we will remember your name.  
The stories will live on;  
they're bright as a flame.*

Even the audience joined in and sang along. People standing next to me had tears in their eyes, and I was struggling to hold back my own tears too ... (field notes, 28/07/11)

Both these examples stood out for me as very emotional and evocative. Because of the power of the story and the sensitive process and practices QMF staff members

engaged in putting the performance together, the local community fully supported the project and QMF. In engaging with the community, furthermore, it turned out that they did not hold any negative feelings anymore. They were ready to ‘move on’ and wanted the piece to end on a positive note, remembering and celebrating their families’ survival. Nevertheless, the performance was emotional and moving for not only participants but also the diverse audience—both South Sea Islanders and ‘white’ audience members. Through the presentation of this story, QMF aimed to present part of Australian history that is largely invisible in the context of ‘white’ narratives; rarely is the South Sea Islander descendants’ version of the story told (Wawn, 1973). The importance of what QMF was aiming to achieve is apparent. In these narratives, however, applying the category or label “South Sea Islander” to the community fails to acknowledge the different groups of South Sea Islanders, the intersections between them and the social processes within and between each group (Slemon, 2001).

With the *Behind the Cane* project in particular, staff members needed to understand the emotions members of the community felt because of the story and personal connection. The emotional response to the *Behind the Cane* concept was a vital part of how the project developed over time and how participants as well as the festival staff and audience felt about it. Managing these emotions effectively throughout the creative development process was important for QMF to create new knowledge and understanding. In order to be able to work with the community, QMF staff members as well as the creative team needed to be aware of the power of the story and what it meant to participants, or as one of my interview participants recalled, “*I’ve been very very touched in rehearsal by the small distance between the story that we’re telling and the theatre that we’re doing. The gap is very small and I like that a lot*” (interview, 28/07/11).

During the creative development and rehearsal period cast members and members of the community kept emphasising how proud they felt to tell their families’ stories and how they were involved in a ground-breaking performance for Bowen. The power of the story thus provided an opportunity to learn about the past of these families and to

build a new understanding through telling *their* version of the story. At the same time, the story disciplined the discursive practices and emotional responses throughout the creative development process, as narratives about the South Sea Islander culture and history defined what could be said and done and what not (Levina & Orlikowski, 2009; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Vince, 2001).

The affective dimension of the performance was the outcome of emotion work throughout the collaborative process of creative development. Without the ‘know how’ and understanding among QMF members of these emotions and the importance of the story for the community, the performance would not have been possible. Similar to what Sharpe (2005b) found in her research with adventure guides where the emotional experience for participants formed a main attraction to the experience, in community cultural development, the community’s emotional attachment to their own stories is part of what makes the project so special for them. Coming to know the power of the story was hence a vital practice for festival members enabling them to understand ‘how to’ approach and work with the community. Through understanding and incorporating emotion work into relational knowledge management practices it was furthermore possible for the QMF staff to create a show which embodied the vision of the festival and transformed the community. Knowledge management constituted and practised in and through relationships necessarily includes managing one’s own as well as other people’s emotions throughout the process. Acknowledging and making explicit these emotions and the power relations is hence crucial for staff members as well as members of the community in order to effectively work together and collaborate.

In this section I have discussed how even though the two projects *Behind the Cane* and *Drag Queen’sLand* were entirely different in their stories, the friendships and relationships that needed to be created, as well as trust and respect, were important practices of creative development in both of them. QMF members have learned ‘how to’ engage in these processes in order to gain support and approval for the projects. Through the practice of building relationships with members of the community, QMF

staff members came to know ‘how to’ approach gatekeepers. In terms of relational knowledge management, it is crucial to share these experiences within the QMF team and to make them explicit, as the different pods worked on different community projects; however, they all engaged in similar practices and can thus learn from each other. By appreciating and affirming what they were doing well in terms of approaching members of the communities, staff members can reflect and focus on what is important to themselves and the organisation (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). The embodied and storied knowledge practices made explicit in this section provided an understanding of the complex environment in which QMF members practised ‘know how’ that contributed to the success of the festival’s community cultural development projects. Believing in the importance of what QMF was trying to achieve was thereby an important element for staff members to be able to effectively carry out their tasks.

### ***6.3 Co-Creating Performances***

Community cultural development projects are co-created *with* the community. The community’s input is regarded as crucial and important, as the project is grounded in real community concerns and it is *their* story that is being told (Adam & Goldbard, 2001; Kay, 2000). The above described relationships between festival members and members of the community therefore needed to be maintained throughout the process. Through collaboration between the festival staff and the community, performances were co-created. Collaboration in this regard means working in partnership rather than imposing ideas upon the community, as Bramham (1994, p. 102) argued: “[l]ocal people are co-participants in the artistic enterprise and empowered by it.” Decisions, such as the naming of the piece or changes in the script, need to be collaboratively made including both festival staff and community members.

Inevitably there might arise conflict as festival timelines for funding or other requirements “can place restrictions on a creative process that by nature may need to

remain flexible” (Mulligan & Smith, 2006, p. 50). At the same time, the community may run on a different schedule. It is therefore crucial to understand the different relations of power during the project development process and to effectively manage the different wants and desires of each group. The practices of collaborating and co-creating the performance in turn constitute ‘know how’ of working *with* the community which is crucial for festival members in order to be able to follow the community cultural development principles and to create new knowledge together with the community. I will describe and make visible how the QMF staff achieved knowing ‘how to’ work with the community through five key activities that constituted the practice of co-creating performances: staff members have learned ‘how to’ work professionally, collaboratively engage community members in decision-making, understand and represent ‘others,’ mentor members of the community and finally, manage conflict. The stories and narratives presented below demonstrate and make visible the complexity of QMF’s community cultural development ethos as embodied and performed by festival members.

### 6.3.1 *Working Professionally*

In the workplace employees are often expected to control their emotions in order to act professionally. Lupton (1998, p. 172) argued that,

“[s]ome emotional states are incited, their open expression encouraged in at least some situations, while it is expected that others should be restrained, kept ‘inside’ the self, whatever the situation. In this context, being a ‘civilized’ person in terms of the presentation of the emotional self means being cognizant of when it is appropriate to repress the expression of one’s feelings and when it is appropriate to reveal them, and to act accordingly.”

The QMF principles of working *with* the community and co-creating performances with them hence defined not only power relations but also staff members’ emotional responses (Vince, 2001). The organisation’s community cultural development ethos required QMF staff members to self-regulate any criticism of the unprofessional cast.

Any of the people who had direct contact with the cast and that, there was never anything negative ever said. There was no criticism. I mean, first time I've ever sung in my life! There was no criticism at all. And I said to Greg last night, "how do you guys do that? Is that part of the strategy?" And he said, "yes it is. That's our philosophy, that's our strategy. We never ever put any negative connotations or criticism on the cast. We will empower and grow. Behind the scenes, yes ... between the staff, yes we need to sort things out as in any organisation. There might be disagreements and things like that and constructive discussions, but NOT in front of the cast!" (interview, 29/07/11)

Reflecting upon QMF members' strategy of working *with* the community, this participant acknowledged and appreciated the organisation's community cultural development ethos. He made visible how staff members embodied the values of QMF and principles of community cultural development; in turn these principles defined the emotional responses that staff members were allowed or restricted to express in front of the community as well as in front of each other. Another participant told a story of a situation in which he wanted to criticise, but had to hold back his emotions:

Tuesday night I had a bit of a moment where I just went off somewhere in the dark and had a bit of a ... Because it can be quite overwhelming! So it wasn't quite working out. Someone did something and I just pushed my button. I had to go off in the dark somewhere and swear a bit (laughs). As long as nobody could hear me. (...) So that's why I had to go down there and yell, "why can't people do their job better??" (laughs) So that's basically what the substance of it was ... I wanted people to be more focused. (interview, 28/07/11)

For the participant it was important not to show his anger in front of other staff members and members of the community. In terms of knowledge practices, emotion work thus formed an important part of relational knowledge management and knowing 'how to' work professionally with others in the process. In the above example, anger on the one hand emanated from the participant's self, but at the same time was produced in the relationships between several individuals interacting with each other to create knowledge. Understanding how emotions shape certain



organisational dynamics (Gergen, 1999; Vince & Gabriel, 2011) is therefore an important element of relational knowledge practices and working professionally. Making explicit staff members' professional work practices demonstrates their 'know how' that enabled them to effectively practice emotion work and hence work *with* the community.

### 6.3.2 Collaborative Decision-Making

In order to co-create performances with the community, community members need to be consulted and included in all major decisions along the way (Adam & Goldbard, 2001). Collaborative relationships with members of the community therefore need to be maintained throughout the process (Johnson, Glover, & Yuen, 2009). Furthermore, "(...) working collectively, with providers and clients as partners in the process of identifying and meeting artistic and social needs" (Bramham, 1994, p. 84) is one of the principles of working with communities, which was clearly followed in both the *Behind the Cane* and *Drag Queen's Land* projects. Using an Appreciative Inquiry approach to community participation and engagement can further give each member of the community an opportunity to feel appreciated and valued for their opinion (Morsillo & Fisher, 2007). Appreciative Inquiry also emphasises making all voices heard and participating in decisions that may affect members of the community (Finegold, et al., 2002; Whitney, et al., 2010). Even though QMF members did not consciously apply an Appreciative Inquiry approach to working with community members, the practice of collaborative decision-making contributed vital 'know how' that enabled effectively working with the community.

Throughout the creative process of developing *Behind the Cane* the QMF staff and creative team always checked back with the community and included them in every major decision about the project, as one participant told:

I mean in these kinds of projects you do what the community tells you, you don't embellish it, you don't rewrite it and even now we're saying, the person who speaks it, has to be family connected. And if anyone is uncomfortable with anything, there is no argument. It goes; we rebuild and there's constantly

bringing the script back ... the songs and bringing it all back to the community. Four or five times as we have created it. Kind of when we reached a milestone, then we took it back. (interview, 29/06/11)

For the participant, the practice of co-creating the performance was one of the “*principles of the festival*” (interview, 29/06/11) that every staff member and member of the creative team needed to understand and adhere to. Self-reflexively he therefore made explicit one of the taken for granted practices performed within QMF and underpinned by their organisational identity. The ongoing engagement in a shared way of approaching the community and working with them has become an important part of constituting QMF’s creative development work over time and space. After conversations with QMF members about this practice, I paid attention to the co-creating approach during my research journey and came across several such situations during the rehearsal period in Bowen. On one occasion, for example, the script needed to be slightly changed to better fit the music. Before making these changes a member of the staff on the ground talked to a community representative to obtain her approval:

Jenny is joining us now, and talks to Elizabeth about a particular scene that they might have to change a bit. Jenny points out that they “don’t HAVE to change it, it’s up to you, just let me know.” Again, I can sense this special relationship between them. Before making any changes to the script, Jenny and the others always check back with a member of the community. They easily reach an agreement in this case and move on to go through the rehearsal schedule for tomorrow. (field notes, 29/06/11)

As the story above demonstrates, decisions were collaboratively made between members of the South Sea Islander community and QMF members not only during the initial meetings but all the way through the rehearsal period up until the day of the performance. Festival members’ practice of collaborative decision-making was important in terms of maintaining and enhancing the relationships between QMF and the community, as well as the foundation for ongoing interaction and support. Through the high level of involvement both sides trusted each other, showed respect and were willing to learn from and with each other. I therefore identified and made

explicit these relationship-enhancing conversations and meetings as important practices that enabled the co-creation of ‘know how’ (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Whitney, et al., 2010) between QMF members and members of the community that was both creative as well as process oriented in making the performance happen.

In terms of the *Drag Queen’sLand* project, consulting meetings with members of the drag community were also frequently held in order to ensure they approved of the stories being told. The QMF team working on this project learned along the way what kind of stories they needed to emphasise as well as what needed to be discarded (“*it was about knowing what has to be let gone*”, interview, 16/08/11) and developed embodied ‘know how’ of potential problems before encountering them. The staff engaged in thorough consultative practices throughout the creative development process:

We did that the whole way, like “what do you think of the script? What do you think of this script? What do you think of the music? Here is your story ... it’s been realised as a poetic piece of music, like a poem and music fusion. And this was a very tragic moment that happened to you, or a really dark thing that happened to you ... What do you think of it? Do you want us to scrap it?” So there was always this sort of consultation of putting things in front of them and pulling it back. (interview, 16/08/11)

Even though the drag queens themselves were not performing on stage, QMF ensured the performance was co-created with them through collaboration and consultation along the way (Stadler, Reid, & Fullagar, 2013). Failure to include them in major decisions could have led to the community disapproving of the piece and its further development. Throughout the process of creative development, however, the QMF staff learned from the drag community and vice versa by engaging in collaborative decision-making and together creating the piece. The QMF staff gained new experience in terms of knowing ‘how to’ work *with* the community and adhering to the QMF values and principles that will be valuable for future QMF projects. This tacit and taken for granted ‘know how’ cannot be documented in checklists and

manuals as conventionally understood in festival management, but rather incorporated as stories into training and induction sessions and learning-on-the-job practices.

### *6.3.3 Understanding and Representing 'Others'*

In order to produce a work that resonates with the community, an important element of community cultural development projects is gaining 'know how' that enables understanding and representing 'others'. Community cultural development projects usually begin with research on the topic, followed by collecting oral histories from members of the community (Adam & Goldbard, 2001). Gibson and Connell (2012, p. 91, *emph. in original*) argued that "[i]n practice organisers are highly likely to be self-interested—it is *their* festival (...)." However, in community cultural development projects, festival managers and staff need to understand that it is about making the community's voices heard rather than the festival's interests. Staff members learning about the community's culture and identity is therefore a crucial part of co-creating the piece and knowing 'how to' work *with* the community over an extended period of time. The QMF staff and event creative teams needed to engage in a thorough consultative process to ensure accurate and sensitive representations of these 'other' cultures. In order to achieve the QMF goal of transforming community members' lives through musical experiences, festival members were conducting ethnographic research during the creative development process of their community projects. They immersed themselves in the different communities and aimed to acquire an insider perspective on local practices and issues. Care needed to be taken in order to determine what was relationally appropriate with each community. Even though QMF aimed for 'authentic' pieces, however, the representation of these communities in various projects was only one possible representation that might have meant different things to different people, as representation is not a true and authentic reflection of reality (S. Hall, 1997a, 1997b). Conflict and several knowledge management challenges were part of this process, as I will describe in section 6.3.5. In order to be able to understand 'others,' the first step for QMF staff members was to conduct thorough research on each community, their issues and histories.

In terms of *Behind the Cane*, the QMF staff found through research that most accounts of the ‘blackbirding’ history in Queensland were written from a ‘white’ missionary’s perspective; hardly ever was the South Sea Islanders’ version of the story told (Docker, 1970; Graves, 1993; Wawn, 1973). The writers of *Behind the Cane* therefore went through a thorough process of interviewing members of the community as they wanted to use their stories verbatim in the show. An important part of this stage of creative development was to find the right way to tell the story from the community’s perspective and to make *their* voices heard, rather than provide a history lesson from QMF’s perspective. The writers emphasised how it was crucial to not embellish the community members’ words or stories, but to simply let them speak for themselves:

We’ve written the end of the play and there was something wrong with it. We couldn’t work out what it was. We’d written this quite poetic ending where the woman goes back to the white beach and she was saying things like, “I’m standing on the white sand where my great grandfather has stood ...” And we were doing this thing because the lady who had told us was very private about the way... there wasn’t a great deal of emotion, it was all held in when she told us. And then we thought, “no, let’s just go back to what she said.” And we were just looking at what she said and took that. So you just use what they said and then it feels honest and it feels right. The minute you start to embellish it with what you wish was there, then it just rings so false! (...) We really worked as hard as we can to stay out of it. Of course you’ve got feelings about it and of course you have to make choices of what to put in and what not. But as much as possible we tried to stay out of it and think, “what is the story that this community would like to tell? What would they want to see?” (interview, 27/07/11)

This narrative makes visible the team’s ‘know how’ in approaching the creative development process and ensuring an appropriate representation of the community. Not only the writers, but also the composers embraced QMF’s co-creating approach and understood the importance of working with members of the community, making the community’s voices heard and to set their stories to music. They knew the songs needed to be composed around those stories and the music needed to underscore their

feelings and emotions. For example, in some songs a Melanesian sound was used to enhance the association with place and history and to evoke personal memories in participants and the audience, an important practice in associating music and place (Cohen, 1995). The creative team hence engaged in practices of understanding and representing the community which in turn constituted their ‘know how’ of co-creating the performance with them.

In terms of the *Drag Queen’sLand* project, the process of creative development was similar to *Behind the Cane*. It started with the artistic director’s idea of a show around the wordplay of ‘drag’ and ‘Queensland’ and presenting a piece about the challenges and issues of being a drag queen in Queensland, rather than merely a drag show. A creative team was then contracted and two cycles of interviews with drag queens in Brisbane were conducted. Particularly during the second phase of interviews, questions were asked that “*a more commercial, hetero-sexual audience would ask. Things like they want to know WHY. They want to know HOW. They want to demystify it without eroticising it or fetishising it*” (interview, 12/07/11). A lot of these initial stories that were collected, demonstrated the challenge of drag queens dealing with multiple identities, one of them being a theatrical identity—a lot of drag queens have a background in theatre (V. Taylor & Rupp, 2004)—but particularly the identities of gay men on the one hand and heterosexual cross-dressers on the other. Berkowitz, Belgrave and Halberstein (2007) found that both these groups are highly stigmatised groups in our society, and thus for drag queens, they have the effect of multiple *negative* identities. Drag queens who were interviewed by QMF expressed this everyday struggle through quotes such as “*I’ve got a sick mind, but a healthy body*”—one of the quotes that ended up as a song in the show. Furthermore, they emphasised their work on stage, saying “*it’s just a job, love, I just put on this frock, go out there, do a performance, then I go home. I don’t walk around in girls’ undies!*” (interview, 12/07/11). Again, this confirms Berkowitz, Belgrave and Halberstein’s (2007) as well as Lewis and Johnson’s (2011) finding that drag is something one *does* and not something one *is*. Based on these very strong statements, key themes were identified early on in the process and a first set of songs created around them with the aim of presenting a show *about* the challenges of being a drag queen rather than a

drag show. For one of my participants understanding and being able to represent the drag community was as valuable an experience as the process of working with them:

I liked working with the community and ensuring that the story we were telling was authentic and real and that the community felt ownership over it, even though they were not performing it in this particular context. But it was *their* stories, they felt proud that *their* stories were being presented and that they were presented with the proper authenticity, I suppose. (interview, 16/08/11)

Even though the drag community supported the performance, the professional actors were struggling with representing drag queens on stage. They did not feel they had the authority to represent drag queens who essentially are performers themselves, because “*they can say, “why can’t I just do it? I’m a performer, why can’t I just do it?!”*” (interview, 12/07/11). Coming to terms with the challenge of representing these ‘others’ could only be achieved through several collaborative and consultative meetings between actors and drag queens. One member of the creative team told,

And once they kind of experienced who these people were and figured out how immensely demure humble, totally unlike what their performance sides are, they are actually a bit nervous, a bit shy. They are very articulate but at the same time a bit ... it’s kind of something dropped inside the actors’ heads and they went, “okay, we can do this now, because our job is to transform as long as we know that we’re doing it with authenticity and with the blessing of those particular people, then we’re fine.” (interview, 12/07/11)

The participant’s story emphasises how understanding different communities and their issues was an important part comprising the practice of co-creating pieces and performances with them (Phipps & Slater, 2010). QMF staff members and contractors needed to know ‘how to’ work with the communities in order to be able to honestly represent them in the pieces. The representational practices within the two projects were different, yet both constituted crucial ‘know how’ that enabled QMF members to effectively work *with* each community to co-create. Through the practice of representing ‘others’ QMF fulfilled necessary dimensions of community arts projects and created new knowledge for both the organisation and the communities. In the case

of *Behind the Cane* the project was “locally relevant while, at the same time, addressing broader social concerns and developments” as well as “help[ed] to locate and/or retain stories from the past that can give a local community a deeper sense of belonging” (Mulligan & Smith, 2006, p. 48-49). In the case of *Drag Queen’s Land*, the main aim of achieving an honest representation of the drag community’s life was to “make the invisible more visible and give voice to those who are rarely heard; leading to more open discourses on how to reduce social exclusions” as well as “help to make people more open-minded and less fearful of unknown ‘others’” (Mulligan & Smith, 2006, p. 48-49). QMF members, in turn, gained with both projects new ‘know how’ about the importance of what they were doing, and about what was possible and achievable through their projects. The stories made explicit in this section emphasise practices of ‘how to’ get to know, understand and represent ‘others’ and therefore affirm QMF members’ knowledge practices of working *with* communities.

#### *6.3.4 Mentoring Community Members*

In Chapter 5 I have already introduced the mentoring practice between pod members and their secondments as important knowledge creation and transfer practices within the team and for newcomers to learn about ‘how things are done’ within the organisation. Mentoring also forms part of community cultural development programs, however, not simply in terms of passing on internal knowledge practices but rather in regards to community capacity building. QMF members therefore engaged in the same practice in different contexts. In my role as the researcher I aimed to make visible these differences.

Mentoring in community cultural development projects can bring about “(...) the opportunity for not only professional development but also emotional development that comes with incorporating new experiences and socialising outside of familiar networks” (Phipps & Slater, 2010, p. 53). Mentoring is a special kind of relational knowledge practice through which both mentor and mentee engage in emotion work. On the one hand emotional connections and bonds between the two can be enhanced (Kram, 1983); on the other hand both produce new knowledge in relation to their own



as well as others' emotions which in turn enhances knowledge transfer practices between them (Fleig-Palmer & Schoorman, 2011). In community cultural development projects a third layer of emotion work can be identified, namely understanding and portraying certain emotions in one's role as an actor on stage—the emotional layers of performance. The following example describes the different layers of emotion work as a crucial part of the mentoring practice engaged in by QMF members to help members of the community develop performance skills. Emotion work further needs to be understood as knowing constituted in the practice of mentoring and knowing 'how to' engage and develop people. The practice has been learned at QMF over time and has come forward as an important process in developing their community cultural development projects.

Dealing with an entirely non-professional cast in the *Behind the Cane* project was a logistical challenge at times, as people had other jobs or duties and often could not make it to rehearsals. Furthermore, it took longer to build their confidence and help them feel comfortable and safe on stage as well as with their singing, particularly because of the affective topic of the performance. However, the QMF team kept emphasising that rather than a perfect show in the end, it was the process of working together with the community, mentoring them and teaching them new skills that mattered the most, as well as making sure their stories were suitably and honestly told. They were reflecting on the process and made visible what is important for QMF in regards to the festival vision and identity, thus engaging in an appreciative approach to managing people (Anderson, et al., 2008; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007).

Through a step-by-step process of building the rehearsals, community members and participants not only became more confident on stage, but also developed new skills and learned new things, a key element of community cultural development projects (Adam & Goldbard, 2001; Harrison, 2010). At the same time, the QFM team gained new knowledge, in terms of 'how to' work with the community, 'how to' mentor,

manage their expectations and build their skills. One member of the creative team recounted his mentoring experience:

In the last couple of weeks I had to amp up sort of my mentorship as well. And what that has meant for me is that I've made stronger connections with people. I've made stronger emotional connections with the text as well, because I had to really work with it. (...) And little things like helping Kevin with his articulation in the *Cane Cutting* song, where he is doing a rap. Little things like that, building a tension and driving forward and getting more and more fortissimo—not louder, but more energy into his voice and his action. About four days out of performing, we didn't see that. He was still kind of hiding behind the microphone and just being quiet. And I got him leaning over a table, putting his weight on the table, yelling at the table to kind of give him some weight. And then I actually shook him. I shook him and said "get angry!" and I pushed him. And I said, "I'm acting, I'm acting, it's okay ... You're okay, I'm okay, I'm not angry at you. Now, do that to me!" And he said, "no man, no, no, no ..." But I got him to do it and I mean, we were safe. That's what I'm talking about. We were away from everybody else, no one was watching, no one was judging his acting exercise that he got, that he understood my intent behind trying to get an emotional response out of him. And I was so grateful that he did! (...) He is doing such an amazing job now, such a big difference! (interview, 29/07/11)

The participant's story demonstrates a positive experience for the mentor and how new knowledge about 'how to' work with cast members was created in the process. Mentoring can thus be regarded as a crucial knowledge enabler (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007), particularly in order to help non-professional cast members develop new skills and confidence through a one-on-one acting exercise with a mentor. Displaying the different emotions throughout the process was therein an important part of meaning-making (Vince & Gabriel, 2011). The participant explained three layers of emotion work he had to engage in: first, emotion work in mentoring members of the community meant for him to develop deeper and stronger connections with them. Second, he needed to understand and manage his own as well as the cast member's emotions in order to be able to effectively work with him. Third, the scene required this cast member to immerse himself in a certain emotional state, which he

achieved through the acting exercise with his mentor. At the same time, the member of the creative team acknowledged that he too learned something new: he reflected on and learned ‘how to’ help cast members get out of their shell as well as developed new mentoring skills and techniques for himself.

The process of working with the community to create the performance was a valuable learning experience for both the professional creative team as well as the non-professional cast members. In terms of relational knowledge management it was important for the QMF staff to understand mentoring and emotion work as part of the practice of co-creating performances and coming to know ‘how to’ work *with* the community. The emotional dimension of relational knowledge management, however, was not explicitly recognised by QMF staff and management; it was rather ‘assumed’ to be naturally part of a mentor’s role engaging in community cultural development.

#### *6.3.5 Dealing with Conflict*

Despite all the positive experiences described above, conflict within community cultural development projects is inevitable. Festival organisers and practitioners involved with community cultural development projects need to understand the complexities of working with a community over an extended period of time as the creative development practices of working with the community can at times pose challenges for the festival organisation, particularly in terms of decision-making processes (Clarke & Jepson, 2011). In the case of QMF, the “grand narrative” (Boje, 1995, p. 1000) of being a transformative festival can potentially create issues in regards to festival funding, marketing and timelines which may be different from what the communities want. Adam and Goldbard (2001, p. 64) maintained that, “[c]onflict lies at the heart of community cultural development work.” Compromising or collaborating, however, are styles of conflict resolution that may benefit both parties (Jordan & Troth, 2002). Collaboration requires patience as well as taking chances with each other; there are high and low points in a collaborative relationship, both of which need to be accepted and utilised effectively (Gregory, 2010). Knowing ‘how to’ collaborate and work *with* the community is therefore crucial in terms of

dealing with conflict. Collaborating with different communities, representing ‘others’ and at the same time planning a successful festival that involves several community projects in different locations can be a challenge. However, following the QMF vision and values, staff members understood that these projects were about the communities rather than about QMF. At times this required the team to step back and let the community be the ‘voice’. Rather than exercising power ‘over’ the community, festival staff members needed to learn ‘how to’ collaborate and work with them.

One example of such a challenge for QMF was choosing a suitable title for the *Behind the Cane* project. I was intrigued by a participant’s story about this issue:

They [QMF] wanted to call this thing *Blackbirding* and the community didn’t want that. So there was a bit of a stand-off. [A QMF representative] had a meeting with the community and they told her, “no not under these terms!” The project would not go forward if it has that title. (...) And I said, “hey, we made a commitment to these people to listen to them and to stand by them. I made that commitment and Jenny made that commitment too, alright. And we are your representatives. So if we’ve made that commitment to them, the promises that we’ve made, are yours. And so going against that, you would break that promise that Jenny and I have made. I am not going to break my promise with those people, the people who gave us their story. I’m not going to do that! I can’t do it, I would have to quit!” I think she got that ... she left a message after that, saying “yeah, it would have been a great title for the QMF, but it’s not about us.” And eventually they came up with a really good title. And it’s all good now. (...) I think it’s just a process you go through, but it was ... it came right down to the very basic reason why we are doing this. And you need to stand by your promises and the very reason why we are here in the first place, and why they allowed us to use their story and all that stuff. It came right down to that QMF versus the community. And we stood by them, so it’s good. (interview, 29/06/11)

In the story, this participant emphasised the conflict that arose between the desires of QMF and those of the community. The QMF development process and cultural values

shaped how decisions were made together with the community and QMF therefore had to back down and listen to what the community wanted. In this case, a shift in power relations led to a learning process for both sides: QMF was reaffirmed that their strategy of working *with* the community rather than imposing ideas upon them was crucial in maintaining a good relationship and creating a successful piece, thus highlighting and appreciating what was important within the organisation (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). The community, on the other hand, learned that their input was regarded as valuable and important too. The productive use of power (Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1980, 1982; S. Hall, 1997a), therefore, reaffirmed the QMF cultural values and created new knowledge for participants involved with the project by enhancing the festival staff's understanding and learning about the South Sea Islander community in Bowen, which in turn will be useful for future projects with other communities in Queensland. In several meetings during and after the festival, QMF staff members talked about the problem and reflected on the issues that arose. The process can be described as a crucial part of coming to know 'how to' develop and maintain partnerships with communities as well as 'how to' deal with conflict in order to gain the community's approval and support for the performance.

To summarise, in this section I have described how *Behind the Cane* and *Drag Queen's Land* were both co-created between QMF and the respective communities. The relational processes of working with them, practising collaborative decision-making and dealing with complex challenges have been learned over time by QMF members. They embodied the practices and principles of working in a partnership with communities. 'Know how' was shared between QMF and members of the communities and together not only new works but also new knowledge and knowledge practices were created throughout the creative development process. Knowing 'how to' work *with* the community and following the principles of community cultural development was achieved through the practice of not exercising power 'over' the community but rather co-creating pieces with them. Co-creation for QMF meant working professionally and managing their emotions effectively, collaborative decision-making with community members throughout the creative

development process, understanding and honestly representing ‘others’, mentoring members of the community and effectively dealing with conflict. The collective ‘know how’ inherent in each activity constituted festival members’ storied and embodied practices of working with different communities. Making explicit these practices contributes to not merely documenting and storing explicit information about each QMF project, but also emphasising the complex environment within which festival members performed the QMF identity and contributed to the success of the organisation.

#### ***6.4 Appreciating Stories about Community Cultural Development for Organisational Learning***

Leaving a legacy with their community cultural development projects is an important goal for QMF and informs the practice of working with communities over long periods of time: *“It was a hugely emotional journey for so many people. The impact of that will be felt for generations” (interview, 16/08/11)*. The legacy and long-term impact of events is an important determining factor of their success (Allen, et al., 2011). Especially in music festivals and community cultural development programs, however, legacy cannot merely be measured in economic terms but social change also needs to be taken into account (Adam & Goldbard, 2001; Gibson & Connell, 2012). Creating and sharing narratives of legacy is therefore an important knowledge practice for both the communities as well as the festival organisation in terms of learning new ways of working together, collaboration among the staff and between staff and members of the community, as well as a deep connection with the identity and values of the festival organisation. Part of the legacy for QMF is making explicit their strengths and developing continuity in regards to knowledge practices. Appreciative Inquiry can be used as an approach to creating a critically reflexive culture within QMF that values and recognises relational knowledge practices. The approach pays attention to intangible elements of legacy by leading with positive and powerful questions for the future as well as creating a shared vision for positive change (Whitney, et al., 2010). An ongoing engagement in these practices further

provides opportunities for reproducing the ‘know how’ constituted within each practice both over time and across contexts (Orlikowski, 2002).

Every QMF community cultural development project is different and stories about each of them need to be told, retold and shared within the organisation as well as with partners in order to make visible the ‘know how’ and knowledge practices rather than merely applying a recipe to each community project. Story-telling and sharing narratives of success (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Küpers, 2005; Snowden, 1999; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003) is therefore crucial in terms of knowledge management. Orlikowski (2002, p. 253) argued that, “[a]s people continually reconstitute their knowing over time and across contexts, they also modify their knowing as they change their practices. People improvise new practices as they invent, slip into, or learn new ways of interpreting and experiencing the world.” Making knowledge practices explicit through narrating and sharing them with others contributes to staff members’ understanding of the taken for granted processes and practices of working with communities. These practices require forward planning and need to be developed over a long period of time rather than merely during the stressful lead-up to the festival season. Not only can individual staff members and QMF teams learn ‘how to’ embody the practices over time, but the organisation as a whole can also learn from the different community projects, the creative development practices employed in each of them, as well as the relationships and trust that need to be built. Informal story-telling can thereby be an effective mechanism of making the practices explicit and spanning across boundaries between teams and communities (Gorelick, et al., 2004; Kellogg, et al., 2006). The practices described in this chapter together comprised the ‘know how’ inherent in translating the QMF long-term strategic plan into stories of success for both the communities as well as the organisation.

Reflections on the two community projects that I drew upon throughout the chapter make explicit what QMF can learn from each of them. I present them separately, as the lessons from *Behind the Cane* are different from those of *Drag Queen’sLand*.

Local information and knowledge gained on the ground incorporated into the organisational context, however, provides opportunities for learning at the organisational level through which the QMF staff can self-reflexively build on their shared practices in the future (Dixon, 1999; Gray, 2007; Orlikowski, 2002). Asking festival members to recall their experiences of co-creating performances as well as drawing upon my own reflections as a researcher therefore contributed to making explicit and appreciating the stories that staff members told about themselves as well as about the organisation (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999). The practice of organisational learning is therefore part of the long-term strategic plan and knowledge management ‘legacy’ for QMF itself.

Upon reflecting on *Behind the Cane* and what QMF can learn from this project, one participant summarised:

I think QMF is already well versed in producing community cultural engagement projects on a large scale throughout Queensland. The Festival has been commissioning, creating and presenting work for many years now! *Behind the Cane* has built on these years of experience, of working in remote communities, and delivering across technical, marketing and artistic departments. It is this history, awareness and experience that supported what, in essence, was a very risky undertaking. (interview, 04/08/11)

According to this participant the *Behind the Cane* project reaffirmed what QMF already does well rather than point out what did not work. The QMF team already engaged in appropriate practices of creative development, of working *with* the community rather than imposing ideas upon them, which I described in detail throughout the chapter. Therefore, it was not necessarily new ‘know how’ that was created through a reflection on these processes and practices, but rather an articulation of the key principles and *why* they were so important. In these reflections, staff members hence engaged in an Appreciative Inquiry approach to identify what worked well within QMF and how these strengths could be reaffirmed (Cooperrider, 1999; Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999) in order to maintain the QMF identity and principles.



Particularly the importance of learning to listen to what the community has to say and wants to express was crucial for the success of these projects and for staff members as well as contractors to understand. The community projects were a co-production characterised by working in a partnership, where QMF provided the framework and the community the story.

For QMF as a whole to become aware of why things are working well is equally important as learning from mistakes or things that are not working well (T. Williams, Ackermann, Eden, & Howick, 2005). Telling and re-telling the story of the ‘blackbirding’ issue, for example, could enhance new festival members’ learning about the community cultural development principles and values of the organisation which need to be embodied when working with different communities, as well as the power relations and emotion work that are part of working professionally. Ghaye (2010) suggested that in a critically reflexive culture particularly positive and appreciative questions may lead teams and groups into new directions and future possibilities. By asking positive questions about festival members’ experiences in working with each other and making visible their narratives throughout the chapter, I therefore contributed to a more explicit understanding of how knowledge was practised effectively within the complex QMF community cultural development context.

Organisational learning from the *Drag Queen’sLand* project was quite different for QMF as the following two stories demonstrate:

I think perhaps with this project, because it was an urban community project, which is what QMF doesn’t do very often—they tend to do more regional community projects—this certainly ... I don’t think at the beginning it was as much thought of as a community project as it really was, if that makes sense?! And I think perhaps even if it seems like a small community, because inside the urban sprawl this is a tiny community, but it has as much weight as a full community of people in one town regionally as it does inside an urban centre. And when you approach it, it’s got the same levels and layers required. I’m not

saying it very eloquently ... but I suppose, maybe it's whether you work with a miniature community or a very large one, you still engage in the same types of processes to develop the work, if you know what I mean. So I suppose, size doesn't matter ... perhaps that's something QMF can take away. (interview, 16/08/11)

The fundamental thing about it was, it was never very clearly defined at the beginning. The opportunity with that is that something can grow—to use a cliché—in an organic way. But the danger with that is that you lack parameters, you lack a sense of exactly what the show will be. Financially and artistically—and the two things did go hand in hand—there was a long gestation process which was hard to get clarity on. Ultimately it actually came in on budget, but I think it was slightly undercooked in the way it looked. (...) But there you go ... It's all about the process of commissioning, if you ask what QMF has learned from it. (interview, 16/08/11)

To summarise, these participants thought that there were two crucial lessons QMF as a whole can learn from the *Drag Queen's Land* project: first, even though it was an urban community project, the process of working *with* the community and engaging in the creative development process was similar to developing regional community projects. Regardless of the size of the community and the location, the engagement and creative development practices were similar. Through the vast variety of projects QMF was running across geographic locations and different cultural groups, the organisation has developed a way of knowing 'how to' work with them effectively and 'how to' create successful projects. Interestingly, my participants did not address the issue of having professional actors rather than drag queens on stage in these follow-up interviews. The issue was identified during the creative development process and QMF members learned 'how to' deal with this particular challenge along the way. However, it was not identified as a lesson learned as part of their reflections after the festival. Making visible the issue in my analysis, though, provides an opportunity for learning for staff and teams.

Second, in terms of parameters, it became apparent from the *Drag Queen'sLand* project how QMF should aim to define parameters from the beginning, so that everybody can work towards a common goal. The challenge, however, is to still leave enough space for creative ideas and changes along the way within those commonly agreed parameters, an issue commonly identified in community arts (Mulligan & Smith, 2006). In my role as the researcher I hence made explicit several stories and practices of building relationships and co-creating the performance in an attempt to contribute to QMF becoming a 'learning organisation'. I described the complex environment in which festival members co-created these projects and provided a critical reflection on their embodied knowledge practices. For QMF in particular, the different communities provided different contexts for learning and developing knowledge practices.

The lessons learned from each community project were valuable elements for QMF's internal legacy. Equally important components of legacy, however, are stories and narratives of success that highlight the social impact of the event for the community (Derrett, 2003; Gibson & Connell, 2012). In community cultural development projects in particular, these stories emphasise what the community learned from being engaged with the project, the community capacity that was built as well as the long-term value for the community in terms of social change which is often intangible (Adam & Goldbard, 2001; Bartleet, et al., 2010; Phipps & Slater, 2010). For the organisers at the same time, narratives of success provide strong statements of the importance and value of community cultural development for the organisation as well as foster partnerships and support for future projects. The practice of creating and sharing these stories therefore contributed to QMF's relational knowledge management practices (Boje, 1991; Thomas, et al., 2001). Making visible and recognising the success stories was an important part of the QMF strategic plan. One member of the permanent staff explained, "*because of course, you keep saying these things [community cultural development projects] have a profound effect, but the more evidence you have the less it can be challenged*" (interview, 16/08/11). Another staff member acknowledged that "*it's hard to quantify*" (interview, 29/06/11).

With their community cultural development projects, QMF aimed to achieve legacy for the community as well as the festival organisation. Providing an opportunity for community members to learn and gain new skills, as well as creating performances that united the community were central elements of QMF's vision. Furthermore, festival attendees also learned about their region or community: "*So the box office ultimately doesn't matter. It's about people on the ground, about the attendance, people experiencing the festival as a whole, that's most important*" (interview, 16/08/11). In return, the festival organisation's success partly depended on the long-term value of their projects; being able to prove that they created legacy in regional communities further enhances the profile and success of the organisation. Only providing attendance numbers and other (economic) measures of success is not enough in community cultural development programs. I have thus identified the practice of creating stories of success through their community cultural development projects as an important element of the strategic planning process and long-term partnerships with communities and have provided several examples of success stories throughout the chapter. These success stories are vital for QMF to gain support for future projects.<sup>6</sup>

In the case of *Behind the Cane*, the legacy of the project for the community mainly concerned making new friends and learning about their history, as well as gaining new skills and developing local talent. One participant expressed the value of the project for the community:

The non South Sea Islander people who are in the show, of which there are now many, are learning a lot about two things I think ... one about the history, but also about the South Sea Islander community as they are here now. There's a lot of friendships being formed. And people have expressed that to me, saying how wonderful it is to meet people and to develop those friendships. "I knew them and we used to pass each other on the streets, but now we're friends!" That sort of stuff. You know, of course that happens in any community when they get together, but it's kind of special when you not only meet people but you also

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<sup>6</sup> QMF has since built on this success. For the 2013 festival season the organisation has again been successful in gaining financial support from several grants as well as over 80 partners and sponsors (personal communication, June 2013).

engage in their story as well. There is a deeper understanding and a deeper level of respect because of that, I think. (interview, 28/07/11)

Making new friends and building relationships is an important element of community cultural development projects as expressed by this participant in her narrative of positive change (Bartleet, et al., 2010; Kay, 2000; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). For the town of Bowen, a long-term benefit of making new friends within the community was recognised by my participants. They valued the fact that they now know other people in the community and have established close friendships with them through an involvement in the *Behind the Cane* project. Not only the performance itself but also the shared leisure experience of hour-long rehearsals as well as other social activities such as going out for drinks after rehearsals, have created bonds between certain members of the community that will be long lasting. For QMF, the narrative of making new friends and bonding with other members of the community was crucial in terms of highlighting the importance of what QMF does, how the organisation works with the community and what the long-term value of these projects is. The stories of success therefore form an important element of the QMF long-term strategic plan and once shared within the organisation as well as with partners they constitute a common understanding and organisational knowledge about the QMF identity and importance of these projects. Identifying and affirming what is important for QMF as well as the communities is crucial in terms of appreciatively managing for the future and becoming a learning organisation (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007).

In terms of the *Drag Queen's Land* project creating a better understanding of who the drag queens and what their challenges are, was a major goal for QMF. Making the audience aware of challenges and issues drag queens have to face every day contributed to their understanding and acceptance of this particular community. Rather than putting on a drag show with only a focus on performance, QMF aimed to dig deeper and portray some of the challenges due to stereotyping members of this community and therefore contribute to social change. In the long term, QMF aims for better inclusion of the drag community which cannot be evaluated at this stage. For

the actors and team, however, the experience of working with drag queens and learning from as well as about them was a vital element of the project. Making explicit the success stories of knowing ‘how to’ work *with* the community and with professional actors representing them, as identified throughout the chapter, is therefore crucial both within QMF as well as with partners. In contrast, participants in the *Behind the Cane* project were non-professionals. For them community capacity building was hence more important in terms of developing new skills knowledge (Adam & Goldbard, 2001):

The councillor I met yesterday stops by too and we briefly catch up. He emphasises that people like Tamara, who is very talented, would never actually go out and seek any opportunities, but in this case, “the opportunity has come to her”, which is a beautiful thing. He hopes that she will continue singing, because she has a great voice. (field notes, 29/07/11)

For QMF, it is important that the newly developed skills, as well as the relationships and friendships that were formed along the way will not be lost. Many participants mentioned that once the festival was over there would be “*a big hole*” (field notes, 28/07/11) for those who were involved. Emotion work therefore comes into play not only during the creative development process but also at the post-festival stage. The importance of keeping participants engaged in some other form came forward as a strong theme in discussions after the festival. While the temporary festival staff moved on to other jobs, the permanent team took on the role of keeping community members engaged on a smaller scale throughout the off-season. QMF’s long-term strategic plan facilitated this process, as it was the permanent staff who made the initial contacts with community members, then passed on the project to seasonal staff members to finalise. Attending the performances, however, meant that the permanent staff never lost touch with the community throughout the process and could easily take over again after the festival. Continuous engagement was important for QMF in terms of the practice of sustaining relationships throughout the off-season as well as in regards to creating success stories that contributed to organisational learning. Sharing these success stories about what has been created and gained through *Behind*

*the Cane* and *Drag Queen'sLand* was important for QMF in order to gain support for future projects.

The reflections as expressed by my participants provide narratives that contribute to QMF's organisational learning from each project and each community. Even though the creative development process and the practices staff members needed to be aware of were similar for each project, by sharing the above identified differences between *Behind the Cane* and *Drag Queen'sLand* the team can learn from each of them. Therefore, organisational learning can only be achieved if the stories—both success stories as well as stories about issues and challenges—are shared among the entire team, not merely within the pods that are responsible for the project. Formal as well as informal rituals as described in Chapter 4 provided opportunities for festival members to share such stories. Moreover, within the QMF team the 'knowledge brokers' I have identified in Chapter 5.6 were mainly responsible for sharing these stories as it was them who were most involved in different projects and thus provided stories of success for the team and the entire organisation. The 'knowledge champions and strategists' within QMF (i.e., the permanent staff) later transferred the stories through to the next festival season. Over time, a more explicit approach to storytelling from their different roles could contribute to the organisation's refinement of their practices and therefore to innovation and competitiveness in the long term (Larson, 2011), as I will discuss in Chapter 7. Creating and sharing narratives of legacy is important both for the communities and for QMF internally, as well as for QMF to gain funding for future projects. The practice of translating the QMF long-term strategic plan into stories of success, as described in this section, contributed to QMF becoming a 'learning organisation'.

## **6.5 Summary**

In this chapter I have made explicit several taken for granted knowledge practices that informed QMF community cultural development projects as well as how they were

enacted by QMF staff members. My practice based understanding of knowledge management (Corradi, et al., 2010) highlighted festival members' embodied and storied practices of building relationships and co-creating performances with members of the communities. Stories and narratives thereby provided thick descriptions of the complex environment (Geertz, 1973; Gorelick, et al., 2004; Küpers, 2005; Snowden, 1999) within which festival members practised and performed the QMF identity in external relationships with members of the communities.

In particular I argued that merely a documentation of explicit knowledge from each project (such as attendance numbers, checklists or e-mail documentation) is not enough for understanding the complex 'know how' constituted within QMF community cultural development projects. These projects were all different—they were created and produced in various locations throughout Queensland and with different communities. The 'know how' constituted in each of them, however, enabled QMF members to effectively approach gatekeepers and key members of each community and to work *with* them over an extended period of time. Despite the seasonality issue of festival organisations, emphasising long-term partnerships with various communities was part of QMF's strategic plan and was achieved through careful consultative practices with each community.

I have argued throughout the chapter how power relations and emotion work were crucial elements of working with members of the communities and needed to be understood by staff members as part of practising relational knowledge management. Through a delicate dealing with controversial issues and partnering with the community throughout the creative development process, QMF was able to effectively represent them in the performances. Without the 'know how' and understanding among QMF members of the power of the stories themselves and their importance to the respective communities, the performances would not have been possible. Festival staff members' embodied understanding of emotion work thereby enhanced their professional work practices. The QMF identity and community



cultural development ethos underpinned their ‘know how’ of working *with* members of the communities rather than imposing ideas upon them. Power was hence productively used not only internally, but also in external relationships with community members. I made visible and explicit the practices of building relationships and co-creating performances by recounting and critically reflecting on my participants’ stories as well as my own experiences.

The strong QMF identity and community cultural development ethos were effectively performed and enacted by festival members through external relationships with members of the community. The collaborative process of co-creating performances with the community in turn offered narratives of success which contributed to QMF gaining support for future projects as well as becoming a ‘learning organisation’. These stories of success provided the ground for a prospective Appreciative Inquiry approach to managing for the future by emphasising and affirming what worked well within QMF (Van Tiem & Rosenzweig, 2006; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003; Whitney, et al., 2010).

## Chapter Seven: Conclusion

### STATEMENT OF CONTRIBUTION TO CO-AUTHORED PUBLISHED PAPER

This chapter includes parts of a co-authored paper in section 7.2 where I use and extend Fullagar's idea of the 'ethnographer in residence'. The bibliographic details of the co-authored paper, including all authors, are: Stadler, R., Fullagar, S. & Reid, S. (in press): The professionalisation of festival organisations: A relational approach to knowledge management, *Event Management*, 18(1)

My contribution to the paper involved: the provision of the data, preliminary analysis of the data into a usable format and providing direction on the scope and structure of the analysis and publication.

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Raphaela Stadler

\_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Simone Fullagar

This thesis was inspired by my personal experiences and involvement in the challenges of festival management. I recognised the issues of knowledge management in festivals and particularly the complexity of working within temporary, pulsating

organisations. Through my critical engagement with the literature, I identified how festival and event studies had thus far regarded knowledge largely as an ‘asset’ to be documented and stored in databases and checklists (see for example, Abfalter, et al., 2012; Allen, et al., 2011; Getz, 2002). The relational dimension of knowledge management had not been investigated despite the importance of ‘people’ and ‘relationships’ in festival organising. In this thesis, I have drawn up a social constructionist and practice-based understanding of knowledge and knowledge management (Corradi, et al., 2010) to contribute to the field of festival studies. Understanding knowledge management as an ongoing meaning-making practice throughout the entire festival life cycle can enhance innovation and organisational learning. By emphasising ‘know how’ rather than ‘know what’ (Cook & Brown, 1999; Kellogg, et al., 2006; Orlikowski, 2002) I highlighted festival members’ implicit and tacit knowledge base and their particular ‘ways of doing things’ within the organisation. For example, I emphasised staff members’ largely taken for granted ‘know how’ that enabled them to effectively work together and collaborate through practices such as building relationships and participating in organisational rituals. Enriching this understanding with post-structuralist ideas of power/knowledge and emotion allowed me to explore knowledge management practices through stories and narratives (Clegg, 1998; Foucault, 1982; Renzl, 2007). Through my research I identified how QMF was a highly successful festival organisation and I hence employed an Appreciative Inquiry approach to uncover positive experiences and stories of success (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003).

In regards to methodology, both the field of festival management as well as knowledge management lack research that employs ethnographic methods (Fullagar & Pavlidis, 2012; Holloway, et al., 2010; Kalling & Styhre, 2003; Kane, et al., 2005; Magalhaes, 1998). Only through an immersion in the field and being an ethnographic researcher, however, can one understand the culture of the organisation within which knowledge management is practised, enacted and embodied. The culture and identity of an organisation is crucial in constituting ways of working together, collaborating and co-creating and sharing knowledge (Donate & Guadamillas, 2011; Du Plessis,

2006; McLean, 2005; Suppiah & Singh Sandhu, 2011; D. Wang, et al., 2011; Yang, 2007). By immersing myself in the QMF culture I was able to explore how relational knowledge management was enacted from both an insider and outsider position.

Based on my reflections and engagement with the literature, I was guided by the following research question:

*How does the Queensland Music Festival's approach to knowledge management contribute to its success as a festival organisation?*

To further explore this question, the following three sub-questions also informed my research:

- What knowledge management practices does QMF utilise to implement its vision and community cultural development principles?
- How do QMF's organisational identity and interdisciplinary team structure shape knowledge management practices?
- How can an appreciative and reflexive understanding of relational knowledge practices contribute to organisational learning within QMF?

Before summarising the findings and contributions of my research based on these questions, I would like to reiterate that I was not aiming to find the 'truth' about relational knowledge management practices within festival organisations (Burr, 2003; Saukko, 2003). Rather I wanted to explore different perceptions and meanings based on my participants' understanding of knowledge and knowledge management as practised in relationships. Through an immersion in the festival organisation I also aimed to explore knowledge management within the QMF from both insider and outsider positions as well as the many "spaces between" (Corbin Dwyer & Buckle, 2009, p. 54). The research was thus co-constituted with QMF; my interpretations, however, are only one possible production of meaning (Alvesson & Skoeldberg, 2000; Richardson, 2000).

## *7.1 Contributions to Knowledge Management in Festival Organisations*

In attempting to answer my question of how the QMF approach to knowledge management contributed to its success as a festival organisation, I found that the identity of the organisation underpinned all practices and processes and provided the context within which knowledge management was practised and embodied by staff members. In particular, I was struck by how a shared vision and culture among the entire team contributed to a common understanding of what QMF was trying to achieve and how they were working together collaboratively. The organisational identity also shaped power relations and emotion work not only among the festival staff but also with members of the communities. In particular, the organisational culture and community cultural development ethos shaped staff members' tacit 'know how' of constructively using power in working with each other, collaborating and co-creating performances with members of the communities. Furthermore my emphasis on relational knowledge management among the team highlighted how knowledge was practised and how organisational learning was achieved through affirming and appreciating what worked well within the organisation. The findings from my interdisciplinary study thus contribute to both the festival management and knowledge management fields of research.

### *7.1.1 Knowledge Management within Festival Organisations as a Storied and Embodied Practice*

In this thesis I have argued that in order for individuals and teams to be able to be self-reflexive about individual and organisational knowledge practices, the practices first need to be made explicit. My role as an ethnographic researcher was to make these practices, and the relational knowledge constituted within them, visible for the organisation by identifying how the team worked together, created and shared knowledge in relationships. Staff members' tacit knowledge was thereby regarded as a form of 'knowing' and 'know how' constituted in action and practice (Orlikowski, 2002). In particular, my practice-based understanding of relational knowledge management within QMF emphasised not only the knowledge practices themselves,

but also the social, historical and structural context within which they were enacted and narrated (Corradi, et al., 2010; Küpers, 2005). Corradi et al (2010, p. 278) maintained that, “(...) the dynamic of the everyday reproduction of practices is not a mechanical iteration of the same activities: on the contrary, it is a process of innovation by repetition, that is, constant adaptation to changing circumstances, and innovation engendered by practice.” Therefore, through making their knowledge practices explicit as the researcher, I contributed to staff members’ reflection and learning on what worked well, building on their strengths and engaging not only in individual and team learning but also in organisational learning.

In regards to an embodied and storied practice-based understanding of knowledge management, my research makes a particular contribution to the festival management literature by emphasising the relational dimension of knowledge management rather than merely regarding knowledge as an ‘asset’ that can be documented and stored. Thus far only a few studies have acknowledged the relational dimension of knowledge management in events (Abfalter, et al., 2012; Allen, et al., 2011; Katzeff & Ware, 2006; Ragsdell, et al., 2013). However, none of them employed a social constructionist perspective or drew upon post-structuralist insights to examine how knowledge management is practised. My research therefore contributes to this body of knowledge by conceptualising knowledge management as a relational, ongoing and context-specific process and an embodied and storied practice, co-constituted between all members of the festival. In regards to the knowledge management literature, my research makes a further contribution by focusing on a special case of a temporary, pulsating organisational structure, highlighting the complex and ever-changing context in which knowledge is produced, shared, embodied and practised. At the same time, however, QMF is a professional organisation that has developed a strategic plan for long-term sustainability despite seasonal changes in staff. The complexity of long-term vision and short-term delivery common to festival organisations poses several knowledge management challenges and needs to be recognised as a unique environment for knowledge management to be practised.

In order to explore these issues, I have responded to the call for more social constructionist and post-structuralist based research in knowledge management highlighting meaning-making, story-telling, power and language (Gordon & Grant, 2005; Vince & Gabriel, 2011) as important dimensions of relational knowledge management. Stories were thereby regarded as “anecdotes of experience” (Orr, 1996, p. 125) which not always require a formal beginning, middle and end as other definitions suggest. Rather I emphasised how telling and re-telling certain stories was a means through which the ‘know how’ constituted and embodied within the story could be built on and developed, drawing upon common processes recognised in the broader organisational literature (see for example, Boje, 1991; Küpers, 2005; Snowden, 1999, 2000; Thomas, et al., 2001). Sharing stories with each other is an important ongoing practice for all staff members and hence I have demonstrated how QMF can benefit from creating opportunities for sharing stories as well as a more explicit understanding of embodying and embedding story-telling in organisational processes. I have described throughout how QMF members engaged in different knowledge practices both internally as well as in external relationships with members of the communities. The stories and narratives of how knowledge was practised thereby provided insight into the complexity of QMF’s program rather than merely documenting explicit information about each community project.

### *7.1.2 Organisational Identity and Interdisciplinary Teams*

Throughout my research journey I learned how the organisational identity and decentralised, interdisciplinary structure within QMF emphasised collaboration and teamwork. I was struck by how professionally staff members performed their roles and how they contributed to effective knowledge management practices internally as well as externally with contractors, artists and members of the community. Throughout this thesis I have highlighted how the QMF community cultural development identity and organisational culture shaped knowledge management and knowledge practices within the organisation. Both provided a common ground for knowledge to be constructed and practised. In particular, I demonstrated how QMF aimed to be a transformative festival through its vision (“To transform lives through unforgettable musical experiences”, QMF, 2011) and how the team had developed a

shared understanding of *how* they needed to work together as well as with the communities to make this happen. The ‘know how’ constituted in each practice and activities was hence shaped by the QMF vision and identity and shaped them in return. The collaborative culture in particular supported effective relational knowledge management not only within the core team but also with seasonal staff and members of the community. I demonstrated how the positive work environment and feeling of belonging to the team enhanced motivation, commitment to the organisation and open communication, thus contributing to a knowledge-sharing culture within the team (J. Hall & Sapsed, 2005; Jo & Joo, 2011; Michailova & Sidorova, 2011; Morrison, 1994). The ‘family’ metaphor (Lennon & Wollin, 2001) was frequently used by participants as well as myself to describe our feelings and emotions about belonging within the QMF culture. Two years later, I still feel I am part of the ‘QMF family’ and enjoy catching up with them as often as possible.

I further argued that the collaborative organisational culture shaped relational knowledge management within QMF and contributed to the success of the organisation. The culture not only supported working together effectively but also encouraged everybody to share their ideas, both permanent and seasonal staff as well as members of the communities. Therefore, collaboration enhanced both the co-creation of new knowledge as well as the effective transfer of knowledge within the team. Particularly the practice of creating formal and informal knowledge transfer rituals provided an opportunity for staff members to come to understand ‘how things are done’ within QMF and ‘how to’ collaborate. Without these rituals, informal means of sharing tacit and embodied ‘know how’ would be lost.

The second element of QMF’s relational knowledge management approach was their human resource management strategy and interdisciplinary team structure, an organisational structure that emphasises effective team work and staff alignment practices. The everyday QMF setting and internal structure within which relational knowledge practices were enacted and performed contributed to the success of the organisation in terms of effectively working together as a team (Currie & Kerrin,



2003; Yahya & Goh, 2002). I described how QMF employed a relational approach to human resource management emphasising staff members' background and embodied 'know how' as well as how well they worked together as a team and complemented each other in terms of 'know how' and skills. Furthermore staff alignment with the vision and QMF identity turned out to be crucial in terms of creating a shared understanding, thus contributing to effective knowledge management and organisational learning despite the fact that most of the staff left the organisation after the festival. My own journey in coming to understand and embrace the QMF vision was similar to what staff members experienced and provided an opportunity for me to reflect on these processes. In regards to QMF's internal human resource management strategy I have hence demonstrated how recruitment and development processes constituted staff members' 'know how' that enabled them to effectively collaborate.

I have examined how the unique interdisciplinary pod structure at QMF was produced and created through practice and how it is different from the more conventional festival organisational structures around functional teams (Van der Wagen, 2007). Having teams of people with diverse backgrounds and experience yet a shared understanding and passion for 'their' projects can enhance relational knowledge management. Furthermore each pod member employed several formal as well as informal roles in regards to knowledge management. In my role as the researcher I made explicit these 'knowledge champion and strategist', 'knowledge broker' and 'knowledge worker' roles and responsibilities (M. J. Earl & Scott, 2000; Meyer, 2010) and how they enhanced vertical as well as horizontal knowledge transfer. I aimed to contribute to QMF staff members' more explicit understanding of their knowledge management roles, which can further enhance professionalisation, knowledge management and organisational learning (Stadler, et al., in press).

### *7.1.3 Power Relations and Emotion Work*

In regards to power/knowledge relations I have demonstrated throughout how power and knowledge constantly shape each other. According to Foucault, there is no knowledge without power and power is at the same time constituted by knowledge

(Foucault, 1977, 1980). Power circulated not only within the festival team but also between staff and community members, and thus shaped how knowledge was practised. Particularly the complexity of QMF's community cultural development programs posed several knowledge management challenges upon the team, who needed to be able to create long-term partnerships with communities rather than impose ideas and exercise power 'over' them. Relations of power further shape and socially construct emotion work (Lupton, 1998; Vince & Gabriel, 2011) and therefore need to be understood as enabling or restraining the different relational knowledge management practices festival members engage in. I have identified emotion work as central to all knowledge practices within the organisation. Staff members were required to effectively manage their emotions throughout the processes of knowledge creation and transfer in order to be able to work professionally.

In the process of my ethnographic research and being an insider/outsider to the organisation, I came to understand power and emotion work as contributing to QMF's knowledge creation and transfer practices both internally as well as with different communities. In particular, the organisational culture encouraged the constructive use of power in working with each other and collaborating, therefore effectively shaping both the creation of new knowledge and the transfer of existing knowledge. I have provided several examples of power relations and emotion work throughout and particularly highlighted emotion work as a crucial element of QMF's community cultural development programs. Staff members and QMF contractors needed to understand and professionally work with their emotions in relation to their team members and others in the community in order to be able to come to know 'how to' co-create performances with them. Being able to effectively perform emotion work in their different roles was regarded as an essential skill for seasonal staff members to have, yet it was taken for granted by permanent staff and management. In the case of *Behind the Cane*, for example, the power of the story itself required the staff to delicately deal with controversial issues and include the community throughout the entire process of creative development in order to effectively represent them in the performance (Stadler, 2013). Certain emotions were not shown in front of the community or each other, but rather held back. Understanding and buying into the

QMF strategy of working *with* the community rather than imposing ideas upon them was thereby crucial for staff members and contractors in order to be able to maintain a professional relationship and co-create a successful performance. My own experience and reflections of coming to know ‘how to’ approach members of the community demonstrated this process. At the same time, the community’s input and making their voices heard was regarded as valuable and important within QMF, as I have demonstrated using the ‘blackbirding’ example which required the creative team and festival staff to resolve conflict around the naming of the piece. The productive use of power (Clegg, 1989; Foucault, 1980, 1982; S. Hall, 1997a), therefore, reaffirmed the QMF cultural values, organisational identity and reflective practice.

#### *7.1.4 Appreciative Inquiry and Organisational Learning*

Appreciative Inquiry as action research has been applied in different organisational settings as well as in tourism and hospitality research (Koster & Lemelin, 2009; Maier, 2008; Raymond & Hall, 2008) and community development (Finegold, et al., 2002; Morsillo & Fisher, 2007). It has also been employed to knowledge sharing, using a prospective approach to identifying what makes people share knowledge within an organisation (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). However, the approach has not been used in festival and event management research thus far. My research demonstrates how an Appreciative Inquiry approach to research emphasises a festival organisation’s strengths and capacity to innovate. I have argued throughout that learning from positive experiences and stories of success need to be acknowledged in temporary organisations as an opportunity for organisational learning. Engaging in a continuous cycle of reflecting on their practices, regarding challenges and problems as opportunities for learning and understanding knowledge management as relational and dynamic enhances organisational learning for QMF as a whole. Organisational learning, in turn, contributes to QMF’s success as a festival organisation employing relational knowledge management, as I have explained throughout using several stories and examples.

Even though I was not consciously aware during the fieldwork that I was employing an Appreciative Inquiry approach to my research, the story coming through was very positive. I therefore decided to examine more closely QMF's strengths and success in regards to knowledge management in my analysis. Reflecting on what I had learned with the festival organisation and how my perceptions of knowledge and knowledge management changed over the course of the fieldwork, I realised I needed to highlight QMF's narratives of success, make visible what was important to the organisation yet mainly taken for granted and hence emphasise 'what could be' possible in the future (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). I therefore did not use Appreciative Inquiry as an action research methodology, but it provided the context and lens through which I interpreted my findings and answered the question of how the QMF approach to knowledge management contributed to the success of the organisation.

Rather than applying a problem-solving approach (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003), Appreciative Inquiry gave me the opportunity to identify QMF's strengths in regards to knowledge management as well as knowledge creation and transfer practices that are already working well, and to make explicit how QMF can use these strengths to further enhance the organisation's success. On the one hand a critical reflection on what is working well was part of this process. However, at the same time I aimed to provide tools for managing for the future by emphasising and affirming what they were doing well within QMF, hence highlighting a prospective approach to knowledge management (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). In line with the importance of sharing stories and providing opportunities for storytelling within Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999; Michael, 2005; Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003; Yoder, 2004), I explained how I asked participants to tell experiences of working with QMF in interviews and later illustrated several stories and narratives of success (combined with my own positive experiences with QMF) throughout demonstrating how QMF can become a 'learning organisation'. For example, I described how staff members understood and utilised the QMF identity in their day-to-day practices, thus making visible how this taken for granted practice created a shared understanding among the team and therefore supported effective knowledge management. I also recounted

several stories of success in QMF's community cultural development projects which, once identified and made explicit, can contribute to QMF gaining support for future projects as well as becoming a learning organisation. I have demonstrated how these stories of success provide the ground for a prospective Appreciative Inquiry approach to managing for the future by emphasising and affirming what works well within QMF.

## ***7.2 Implications for Practice and Policy***

Many festival and event organisations aim to store their corporate knowledge and lessons learned after the event and start again from scratch the following year (sometimes with an entirely new team). I have, however, shown how effective relational knowledge management in festival organisations can only be achieved using ongoing knowledge creation and transfer practices throughout the entire festival life cycle and including both permanent and seasonal staff. Reflection and strategic planning for the future form part of these practices and need to be understood by all staff members. My research has demonstrated how festival managers and organisers can benefit from understanding the importance of an open and collaborative organisational culture that supports knowledge creation and sharing. Within this culture, all staff members play an important role in terms of relational management. While the permanent staff can be regarded as the keepers of knowledge ('knowledge champions and strategists') over the long-run, seasonal staff members have equally important knowledge management responsibilities in their roles as 'knowledge brokers' and 'knowledge workers' (Stadler, et al., in press). The long-term success of the festival organisation partly depends on all members of the team being encouraged and motivated to contribute their knowledge and engage in knowledge practices throughout all stages of the festival life cycle. The festival management team can hence benefit from creating and maintaining a "knowledge culture" (McInerney, 2002, p. 1014) that supports new ideas, collaboration and innovation throughout the entire festival life cycle.

Effective knowledge practices can enhance innovation, both in regards to internal innovative processes as well as in terms of creative output (Carlsen, et al., 2010; Carneiro, 2000; Donate & Guadamillas, 2011; Larson, 2011; Tschmuck, 2006). QMF's team structure in interdisciplinary pods has been developed over a number of years and has enhanced knowledge transfer practices within and between the teams as well as the co-creation of new knowledge. This structure is unique to QMF and has led to internal innovative practices supporting relational knowledge management. Festival managers could benefit from creating teams beyond the traditional functional areas, emphasising interdisciplinarity and collaboration. QMF team members complementing each other in terms of skills and knowledge and at the same time sharing a common identity and values came to know 'how to' work together effectively and 'how to' contribute to the success of the organisation. In today's competitive festival environment, QMF's innovative internal practices enhanced professionalisation and provided a competitive advantage.

A festival organisation that values relationships and the co-creation of new knowledge can furthermore enhance its creative output (Carlsen, et al., 2010; Larson, 2011). I have shown throughout how the community cultural development ethos within QMF has shaped their knowledge practices in working *with* members of the communities and co-creating performances with them. Making explicit these practices is important for the organisation to identify how working in partnership with members of the communities can bring about creative and innovative ideas for both the community and the festival organisation. If staff members are further able to continuously reflect on their knowledge practices in community cultural development projects, learning at both the individual and team level occurs. In turn these reflections on day-to-day practices contribute to the organisation becoming a 'learning organisation' despite the fact that most staff members leave once the festival is over. The taken for granted practices and tacit 'know how' of working with each other and with members of the communities cannot be documented in checklists but rather need to be shared with others on the team through formal and informal rituals and story-telling practices. For example, the importance of building friendships with key members of each community came forward as a vital practice in QMF's community cultural

development programs. Stories can emphasise how this is done in practice. One participant recounted the importance of: *“looking them [gatekeepers] in the eye, shaking their hand and saying, “We are going to do this.” Making promises that you keep”* (interview, 15/06/11). Festival managers could further encourage staff members to take photos and tape- or video-record their experiences and later share them with others on the team. Weekly written accounts and stories of success could also be collected where staff members highlight and share their experiences of building relationships and making friends with members of the community. QMF is already using social media for different purposes; sharing photos and stories on Facebook or other social media could further support their relationship-building processes and demonstrate ‘how’ staff members engage in these practices.

Moreover, in community arts and community cultural development programs the success of an event cannot merely be measured in economic terms; social factors need to be considered as well (Gibson & Connell, 2012; Molloy, 2002; Phipps & Slater, 2010). The current arts policy in Australia mainly recognises the ‘high arts,’ yet support for community projects is still under recognised (DeVereaux, 2011; Eltham & Westbury, 2010; Hull, 1991; Terracini, 2007). In regards to arts policy and funding, therefore, community festivals and festival organisations engaging in community cultural development need evidence of their success in order to receive funding for future projects and to have their legacy recognised. Attendance numbers and tickets sold are not necessarily indicators of the success of community projects, but rather the skills that have been developed over time and the community capacity that has been built. This suggests identifying and making explicit the ‘practices’ and ‘processes’ of working with communities and engaging in long-term development projects is important to recognise and shows the real value of such projects, rather than merely emphasising the ‘output’ in regards to attendance numbers or ticket sales. One participant said, *“the box office ultimately doesn’t matter”* (interview, 16/08/11), what is more important is community members’ experience and skills development as well as the long-term value and legacy these projects provide for the community.

Making visible the processes of collaboration that underpin festival work, as well as the knowledge practices constituted in relationships, can be difficult for festival organisers. Most practices are taken for granted and part of the organisational identity and culture which has been learned over time and shapes the way people create and share knowledge. One strategy for festival organisations to make explicit their knowledge management practices could be to host an ‘ethnographer in residence’, as suggested by Fullagar (Stadler, et al., 2013). I have shown throughout this thesis how a deeper understanding of the festival culture can be achieved through ethnographic research, as the ethnographer slowly moves from being an outsider to the organisation to becoming an insider and becomes deeply immersed in the culture of the organisation. She engages in similar knowledge practices as the staff in regards to building relationships, co-creating new knowledge and transferring existing knowledge and can reflect on her experiences throughout this process. Her role could be to make the practices explicit and thus contribute to staff members’ reflection on their actions and engagement in organisational learning throughout different stages of the festival life cycle. She can also provide opportunities for staff members to tell their stories and thus contribute to the formalisation of a story-telling process within the organisation.

The role of the ‘ethnographer in residence’ can furthermore be to highlight stories and narratives of success, positive experiences and what works well within the organisation in regards to knowledge management, thus employing an Appreciative Inquiry approach (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007; Whitney & Trosten-Bloom, 2003). Too often outsiders to the organisation identify problems and issues rather than focusing on what is important for the organisation and what their current strengths are. A prospective approach to Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge, however, emphasises ‘what could be’ (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007) possible in the future within the organisation’s existing culture and values. An Appreciative Inquiry approach could further be used as an action research method with a researcher running through the entire cycle of Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge as identified by Thatchenkery and Chowdhry (2007, p. 50): the researcher thereby together with as many organisational members as possible goes through a step-by-step process of,



- 1) discovering ‘what is’ (identifying the five knowledge enablers),
- 2) creating ‘what might be’ (creating future-present scenarios),
- 3) declaring ‘what will be’ (prioritising actions) and
- 4) making ‘what will be’ real (creating an action plan).

The Appreciative Sharing of Knowledge process emphasises what makes people share knowledge within the current culture of the organisation (Thatchenkery & Chowdhry, 2007). In festival organisations, going through this process at different points of the festival life cycle can provide a more comprehensive picture of how members of the organisation collaborate and work together and how they envision the future of the organisation. Festivals are celebrations; they celebrate people, the arts, music, culture and community in specific places and times (Getz, Anderson, & Carlsen, 2010). ‘Celebrating’—through Appreciative Inquiry—the way an organisation works is therefore in the spirit of festival management. An acknowledgment of festivals as spaces of celebration, respect for others (within the team and within the communities they work with), and the value of stories is vital to the success and continuous development of the organisation. Communities and festivals are constantly changing, hence an approach to knowledge management that takes this ever-changing context and complex environment into account is crucial.

The QMF 2013 season is now in full swing and I have gone back to attend some of the events and performances. It is fascinating to see what they have achieved this year; among others, the biggest QMF community cultural development project ever: *Boomtown*—a celebration of Gladstone’s past, present and future with more than 300 cast members on stage, all from the Gladstone community (personal communication, June 2013). Knowing that this project was already in the making when I conducted my research two years ago, I went to Gladstone to see how it had come together and how QMF has achieved its vision and goals. With all my previous experiences with QMF and memories in mind, I have come to understand the importance of these community cultural development projects and have been astounded by what can be

achieved through the arts. I have loved every minute of my research journey with QMF and I am very grateful for this unforgettable experience. This year, however, I simply enjoyed being part of the audience and watching the QMF performances from the outside.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1: QMF Office Design

Appendix 2: Roster

Appendix 3: Summary of Publications on Knowledge Management in Project-Based Organisations

Appendix 4: Initial Set of Interview Questions

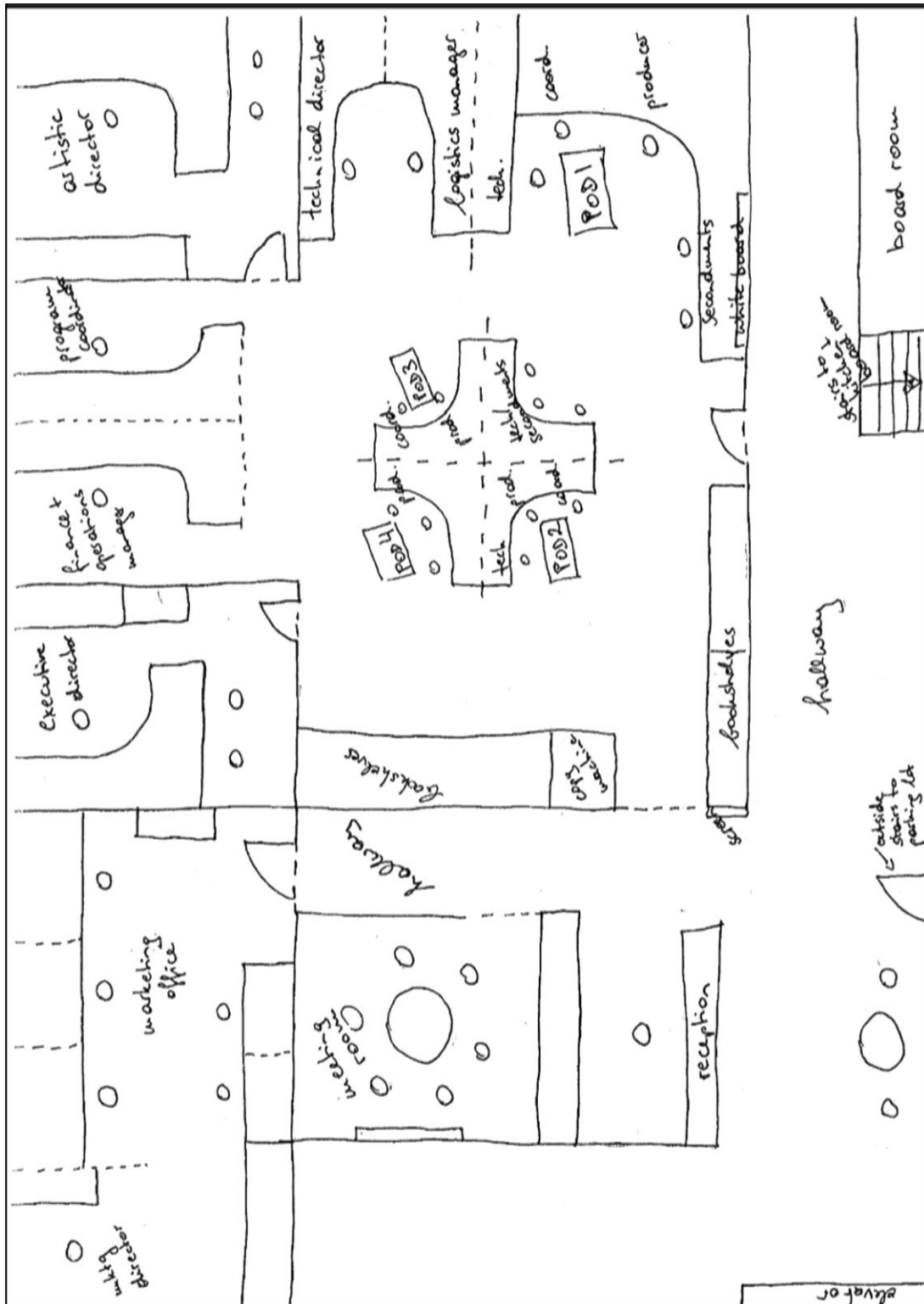
Appendix 5: Informed Consent Information Sheet

Appendix 6: Informed Consent Form

Appendix 7: Interview Participants' Characteristics

Appendix 8: Initial Set of Codes

Appendix 1: QMF Office Design



Appendix 2: Roster

Queensland Music Festival 2011 Valid: 11/05/2011

Event	Location	Prod	Proj	Tech	Mark	Mon Jul 12	Tue Jul 13	Wed Jul 14	Thu Jul 15	Fri Jul 16	Sat Jul 17	Sun Jul 18	Mon Jul 19	Tue Jul 20	Wed Jul 21	Thu Jul 22	Fri Jul 23	Sat Jul 24	Sun Jul 25	Mon Jul 26	Tue Jul 27	Wed Jul 28	Thu Jul 29	Fri Jul 30	Sat Jul 31
Randy Newman with QSO	Concert Hall	EH	HP	KF	GB											QPAC 20:00 X									
Allan Kores	Thursday Island	EH/LG	HP	KF	GB					TI 17:30 X										Aur'kun TBC			Mapoon 19:00		
Cape York Instrumental/ASQ Tour	Calrms	LG	HP	SG (KF)	GB	Mos/Yar																			
Spirit of India	Gold Coast/Con	LG	HP	SG (JW)	GB								G.Coast 19:30			M/C TBC									
Radio Plays	Miles/Blackall	LG	HP	SG (BN)	GB												Miles 19:30						Blackall TBC		
Opera at Jimbour	Jimbour	GP	TH	PB	GB																				
TLGRF	Old Museum	GP	TH	PB	GB				Old Mus 19:30 X																
Song Trails North	Various	GP	TH	PB	GB																				
Song Trails South	Various	GP	TH	PB	GB																				
The Old Country Comfort Hour	Various	GP	TH	PB	GB					T.Ville 20:00			QPAC 20:00 X												
Plano Lessons	Cremorne	KT	AW	BN	KL																				
Drag Queen's Land	Judith Wright	KT	AW	BN	KL																				
Meet Me in the Middle of the Air	Riverstage	KT	AW	BN	KL																				
Stretch 'n' the Truth	Various	KT	AW	BN	KL																				
Behind the Cane	Bowen	MP		KF	KL																				
Classic Country	Gladstone	KW	KW	SG (KF)	KL																				
Site Listening	Various	KW	KW	SG (JW)	KL																				
Launch	JWC	KW	KW	JW	KL																				
Score It	The Con	KW	KW	JW	KL																				
Vanuatu Water Music	South Bank	KW	KW	JW	KL																				
Ilmillekki Quartet	Bris Jazz Club	KW	KW	JW	KL																				
<b>Umbrella Events</b>																									
R & J (EDC)	Playhouse	KW	KW	JW	KL																				
Blacklust	JWC	KW	KW	JW	KL																				
Cosi Fan Tutte	Con	KW	KW	JW	KL																				
An Idyll for the Misbegotten	Con	KW	KW	JW	KL																				
Emerge	QACI/Kirra				KL																				
Vaporisation	Old Museum	KW	KW	JW	KL																				

### Appendix 3: Summary of Publications on Knowledge Management in Project-Based Organisations

Within project-based organisations it is argued that knowledge is created and shared between experts, and projects therefore provide the basis for the creation of new knowledge and innovation. However, at the same time, the short-term nature of projects and the attention that has to be given to schedules and deadlines, make it difficult to build a common ground for sharing knowledge among project team members, let alone the necessary commitment and motivation. Furthermore, the lessons learned from a project are difficult to document or transfer to other projects or the organisation as a whole. When the project is over, a lot of knowledge is lost (J. P. Lewis, 1998; Liebowitz, 2005; Lindkvist, 2005; Scarbrough et al., 2004). In this regard, project-based organisations share similar characteristics with festival organisations.

Furthermore, in both project-organisations and festival organisations explicit knowledge (in the form of project proposals, plans, reports, manuals, etc.) as well as tacit knowledge (relying on expert know-how and skills, experience and insights) are crucial. Both forms of knowledge have to be managed effectively and efficiently (Boh, 2007). It should be stressed, however, that most research on knowledge management in project-based organisations is limited to large construction and manufacturing firms, communications and the media, and consulting firms (Kodama, 2007), and most of them focus on new product development projects (Bresnen, et al., 2005). However, the overall idea of festival management is the management of an experience, and knowledge management in festivals is thus quite different and more complex. The table below provides a summary of knowledge management research in project-based organisations and their major findings/argument.

<b>Author(s)</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Major findings/argument</b>
DeFillippi & Arthur (Geertz, 1973)	Paradox in Project-Based Enterprise: The Case of Film Making	DeFilippi and Arthur conclude that learning takes place in episodes for both the film industry as a whole, as well as individual participants. Some collective memory is built through each film project and things that worked or did not work. At the same time, participants and crew members build their own

		memory and experience in the field. However, “what is distinctive here is that there is no place for “organizational memory” as conventionally presented in strategic management theory” (p. 136).
Lewis, J.P. (1998)	Team-Based Project Management	In project management, most attention is given to tools such as Work Breakdown Structures, PERT/CPM or Gantt schedules. More emphasis needs to be placed on the human element, though, as most of the work that goes into projects is done by people.
Barker & Neailey (1998)	From individual learning to project team learning and innovation: a structured approach	A methodology for capturing team learning is developed based on bringing together the contribution of individuals into a team context with a focus on innovative change.
Huber (1999)	Facilitating Project Team Learning and Contributions to Organizational Knowledge	Project teams draw on the firm’s existing knowledge and at the same time create new knowledge for the firm. Project team and organisational design practices are identified that enhance project team learning as well as the creation of new knowledge for the entire organisation.
Ayas & Zeniuk (1999)	Project-Based Learning: Building Communities of Reflective Practitioners	It is argued that a shift from action to reflection is essential for project-based learning and can be achieved through insider/outsider collaboration.
Garrick & Clegg (2001)	Stressed-Out Knowledge Workers in Performative Times: A Postmodern Take on Project-Based Learning	The paper proposes new links between project based learning at work and formal education and highlights the dominant discourses currently shaping the disciplines.
Prencipe & Tell (2001)	Inter-project learning: processes and outcomes of knowledge codification in project-based firms	The authors distinguish three learning processes for inter-project learning at various levels of the organisation: experience accumulation, knowledge articulation and knowledge codification.
Rämö (2001)	Doing things right and doing the right things - Time and timing in projects	Rämö applies the idea of chronos-time (the clock-time, the exact quantification of time) and kairos-time (doing the right things at the right moment, regardless of clock-time) to project management. He argues that in project management both issues arise, and proposes the idea that chronos-time is crucial for efficiency, whereas kairos-time moments are essential for effectiveness.
Scarbrough, et al. (2002)	Project-Based Learning and the Role of Learning Boundaries	In a comparative analysis of two case studies of construction projects, Scarbrough et al. found that projects have a high potential for the generation of learning. However, this kind of project-learning is very much shaped by the ongoing learning activities of the organisation as a whole. Furthermore, it is situation and context specific, and bound to the very project. The exploitation of such learning for the wider organisation is thus limited.
Bresnen, et al. (2004)	A Community Perspective on Managing Knowledge in Project	Social practices and processes need to be considered in regards to processes of knowledge

	Environments	capture, diffusion and learning in project-based organisations. Places particular emphasis on a community-based approach.
Cicmil (2005)	Reflection, Participation and Learning in Project Environments: A Multiple Perspective Agenda	Makes visible what kind of knowledge is important and useful to project work practitioners based on their experience and how they perceive the issues of knowledge and learning in their work.
Ferriani, Corrado, & Boschetti (2005)	Organizational Learning under Organizational Impermanence: Collaborative Ties in Film Project Firms	Highlight that the issue of organisational formation and dissolution that is typical for the US film industry can be overcome by enduring collaborations among interdependent industry participants. Stable interpersonal ties between them can enhance learning even once the project is over.
Fong (2005)	Co-Creation of Knowledge By Multidisciplinary Project Teams	With a focus on knowledge creation and new product development teams, the authors argue that learning must be integrated with current tasks, in order to retain knowledge for future organisational needs.
Gustafsson & Wikström (2005)	Managing Projects Through Reflection	In the highly labour-intensive project-based industry a reflective management process is especially suitable due to the high degree of uncertainty. Through reflective management it is possible to finish the project under any circumstances.
Hall, J. & Sapsed (2005)	Influences of Knowledge Sharing and Hoarding in Project-Based Firms	It is argued that the tendency to share or hoard knowledge within project teams and the organisation as a whole depends both on organisational incentives as well as motivational characteristics.
Love, et al. (2005)	Building a Learning Organization in a Project-Based Environment	In construction organisations, learning needs to be integrated with day-to-day work processes and put into action so that the organisation can avoid reinventing the wheel.
Newell & Huang (2005)	Knowledge Integration Processes and Dynamics within the Context of Cross-Functional Projects	Argue that in cross-functional project teams, it is difficult to create a common knowledge between the team and its stakeholders and the perceived value of the project as well as the maintenance of social capital play a crucial role in the process.
Prencipe, et al. (2005)	Making Sense of Learning Landscapes in Project-Based Organizations	Describe a learning landscape for interproject learning characterised by “variations in knowledge processes, levels of formality, use of technologies, social relations and communicative interactions.”
Williams, et al. (2005)	Learning from Project Failure	Argue that the project team needs to appreciate both success and failure in order to be able to learn.
Boh (2005)	Mechanisms for sharing knowledge in project-based organizations	Proposes a framework of the interaction between individualised knowledge-sharing mechanisms (informal and unstructured) and institutionalised knowledge-sharing mechanisms (formal and embedded in



		organisational routines and structure).
Kodama (2007)	Project-Based Organization in the Knowledge-Based Society	Argues that the key factor for success in a knowledge-based society is the process by which an organisation is able to innovatively combine different knowledge from various projects both internal and external.
Bredin (2007)	People capability of project-based organisations: A conceptual framework	The concept of people capability enhances a more holistic approach to HRM and is particularly valuable in project-based organisations. A framework is suggested for a project-based firm's people capability.
Swan, Scarbrough, & Newell (2008)	Why don't (or do) organizations learn from projects?	Deals with the question of how the organisational context influences learning from projects. Organisations which are centred on projects and where project management is highly developed, are successful in accumulating experience and learning. Organisations with only occasional and very varied types of projects, on the other hand, are less likely to succeed in knowledge sharing and learning.
Cacciatori, Tamoschus, & Grabher (2010)	Knowledge transfer across projects: Codification in creative, high-tech and engineering industries	Found that when a system integrator is present, knowledge transfer strategies based on codification are supported and enhanced. Particularly in volatile environments such as project-based organisations, "the system integrator can embody some degree of organizational memory which favours the systematic transfer of knowledge across projects in industries characterized by technologically complex products" (p. 323).

## Appendix 4: Initial Set of Interview Questions

### Personal Background

- How long have you been working with QMF?
- [If has been working for QMF in 2009: Is there something that you will always remember from the 2009 festival?]
- How would you describe your role with QMF?
- When you first started, what did you have to learn?
- What was your best (worst) experience with QMF so far?

### Festival community

- How does it feel working within the festival community?
- [When you first started with QMF, can you describe the journey of becoming a member?]
- What contributes to creating the QMF culture/community?
- How would you describe your relationship with other staff members/board members/contractors/sponsors/artists? (Stories, examples?)

### Knowledge Management

- What are the sorts of things you need to know to do your job? Examples?
- Where do you get this information/knowledge from? Do you feel sufficient knowledge accessible?
- How would you describe the importance of information and knowledge sharing for QMF?
- Did your role in the festival change over time? Have you found since starting that you need to know more and more along the way?
- What kind of questions do other members of the organisation ask you?
- Who do you think the key people are for knowledge management within the organisation?

- If you had to leave QMF right now, what would QMF do to save your knowledge?
- How do you make sure that everybody is on the same page?
- Where does your understanding of [X] come from?

#### Communication

- How does information flow within QMF? How do you communicate with other staff members/contractors/sponsors/artists?
- How are concerns/problems communicated? Examples?
- How would you describe the importance of the staff/board meetings? Has that changed over time?

#### Follow-up questions

- Has the atmosphere at the organisation changed? Any of the relationships?
- How has your role changed over the last couple of weeks?
- Did you have a good/bad experience during the last couple of weeks?
- Was there anything in particular that you had to learn? How?

#### Questions after the festival season

- How would you describe your overall experience this festival season? Is there something you will never forget?
- Did you learn something for yourself?
- What do you think did the organisation as a whole learn this season?
- Was there a particular challenge you had to face? How did you deal with it?
- What happens now? How do you think the organisation will 'save' your knowledge?

## Appendix 5: Informed Consent Information Sheet



### Knowledge Management within the Queensland Music Festival

#### Research Team:

Simone Fullagar, PhD	Dr. Sacha Reid	Raphaela Stadler
Associate Professor	Lecturer	PhD Candidate
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Email: <a href="mailto:s.fullagar@griffith.edu.au">s.fullagar@griffith.edu.au</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:s.reid@griffith.edu.au">s.reid@griffith.edu.au</a>	Email: <a href="mailto:r.stadler@griffith.edu.au">r.stadler@griffith.edu.au</a>

*Knowledge Management is an important aspect of the success of any organisation. It is a particular challenge for music festivals, due to their short-term nature. Festival members in different areas of the organisation have to create knowledge together and share it quickly and efficiently. This research project aims to identify how festival members perceive their roles and responsibilities in the knowledge management process, and to identify factors that enhance and inhibit knowledge management with the Queensland Music Festival as a case study.*

#### **What is this research all about?**

This research is first and foremost the work of one writer and researcher, Raphaela Stadler. It is being conducted as part of her course of study (Doctor of Philosophy at Griffith University, Department of Tourism, Leisure, Hotel and Sport Management). Her aim is to write about the challenges and opportunities of knowledge management in music festivals and to document the festival members' perceptions of key issues within the process. The findings will contribute to the festival and knowledge management literature and will help increase the awareness of the importance of knowledge management in festivals.

### ***How will the research be done?***

Raphaela will undertake:

- participant observation at the Queensland Music Festival over a period of nine months (January 2011 - September 2011);
- in-depth semi-structured interviews with long-term festival members (paid staff, Board members, volunteers, contractors, artists) as well as newcomers;
- follow up interviews to see how roles and perceptions change over the course of the festival.

Interviews will be held at times and locations suitable to you (approximately 60 minutes each) and will be recorded on a digital voice recorder. If it is not possible to arrange a face-to-face meeting (e.g. festival members in regional Queensland), a telephone interview might be considered at a time suitable for you. It will be conducted from the researcher's home or office to ensure privacy and confidentiality. Telephone interviews will be recorded on a digital voice recorder too, for later transcription. Interviews will explore your experience of knowledge management at the festival and will provide the opportunity to comment confidentially on any issues you find relevant. If you wish, you will be posted or e-mailed a copy of the transcript and you can delete or change anything you have said. All identifying information will be removed from the transcript (names will be changed).

### ***Report of findings***

Findings will be disseminated primarily through Raphaela's PhD thesis. Findings will also be published in various journals (for example, Event Management, Leisure Studies, and Journal of Knowledge Management), and will be presented at academic and industry conferences. For the Queensland Music Festival, a summary of key findings will be compiled. If you would like to obtain a copy, please contact Raphaela ([r.stadler@griffith.edu.au](mailto:r.stadler@griffith.edu.au)).

### ***Possible risks or benefits***

There are no perceived risks involved in this study - you can say as much or as little as you like. No identifying information will be given to management.

### ***Do I have to participate? What if I change my mind?***

You do not have to participate in this research and you can withdraw from the research at any time. You will not experience any disadvantage relating to your festival participation if you do not participate in this research.

### ***Confidentiality and Anonymity***

The information provided by you will remain confidential. Nobody except the research team will have access to it. Your name and identity will not be disclosed at any time and pseudonyms will be used in any public documents. The transcripts of your interviews will be stored in a secure, lockable filing cabinet in the office of Raphaela Stadler for five years, after which time they will be destroyed. Names of places and events will also be changed to ensure you cannot be identified.

### ***Privacy Statement***

The conduct of this research involves the collection, access and/or use of your identified personal information. The information collected is confidential and will not be disclosed to third parties without your consent, except to meet government, legal or other regulatory authority requirements. A de-identified copy of this data may be used for other research purposes. However, your anonymity will at all times be safeguarded. For further information consult the University's Privacy Plan <http://www.griffith.edu.au/privacy-plan> or telephone (07) 3735 5585.

### ***Ethical Conduct***

If at any stage you have concerns, questions or require further information about the research please do not hesitate to contact the Chief Investigators on the numbers above. Griffith University conducts research in accordance with the National Statement on Ethical Conduct in Human Research (2007). If you have any concerns or complaints about the ethical conduct of the research project you should contact the Manager, Research Ethics on (07) 373 55585 or [research-ethics@griffith.edu.au](mailto:research-ethics@griffith.edu.au).

Appendix 6: Informed Consent Form

**Raphaela Stadler**  
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**Knowledge Management within the Queensland Music Festival**

**Informed Consent**

*Acknowledgement of Consent*

I (print name here) .....acknowledge:

- that I have been informed about the research process and consent to being interviewed and/or observed by the researcher;
- that I understand that an interview and/or observation is optional and confidential and all identifying features will be excised from any public use of the material;
- that I have the right to see the transcript of the recording if I wish;
- that I may refuse to answer any question or stop the interview whenever I wish;
- that I may withdraw this consent at any time;
- that my interview will be digitally recorded;
- that only the research team will have access to this digital file;
- that the digital recording will be erased following transcription; and
- that I can contact the Senior Manager, Research Ethics and Integrity, at Griffith University Human Research Ethics Committee on 3735 5585 (or [research-ethics@griffith.edu.au](mailto:research-ethics@griffith.edu.au)) if I have any concerns about the ethical conduct of the project.

Signature: ..... Date: .....

I would like to see a transcript of the recording.

Thanks for your time!

**Raphaela Stadler**

*PhD Student and Researcher*

*Department of Tourism, Leisure, Hotel and Sport Management, Griffith University*

## Appendix 7: Interview Participants' Characteristics

The table below summarises the characteristics of my interview participants and their involvement:

Participant	Core team	Seasonal team	Board member	Drag QLD team	Bowen team	Newcomer	Experienced	Follow-up
1		x			x		x	
2	x						x	x
3	x						x	
4			x				x	
5		x					x	
6		x				x		
7		x				x		x
8		x					x	
9	x						x	x
10	x						x	
11		x			x	x		x
12		x			x	x		
13		x			x		x	
14		x			x		x	x
15		x			x		x	
16		x			x	x		
17		x					x	
18	x						x	
19		x		x			x	
20			x			x		
21		x		x		x		
22		x				x		
23	x						x	
<b>Total</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>



## Appendix 8: Initial Set of Codes

### Highlights

2009  
2011 – expectations  
2011 – highlights

### Knowledge

Information management  
Knowledge Creation  
Knowledge Documentation  
Knowledge Management  
Knowledge Transfer  
Knowledge Practices

### Communication

Email, telephone, etc  
Face-to-face  
Meetings

### Learning

Group learning  
Individual learning  
Learning along the way  
Organisational learning

### Relationships with Communities

Co-creation  
Emotions  
Keep promises  
Legacy  
Respect  
Trust

### Long-Term Thinking

Cycle  
Funding + partnerships  
Reflecting

### Organisational Culture

Atmosphere  
Motivation + Commitment  
Open communication, no secrets  
Participation  
QMF family

### Professional Team

Background + experience  
Job duties  
KM role  
Pod structure

### Shared Understanding

QMF history  
Strategy  
Vision

Examples for the code 'shared understanding':

“The fact that the program has grown so much, is a result of consistency, continuity and shared understanding. It's more than just knowledge, it's understanding and a shared belief system of what the festival should be.” (interview, 15/06/11)

“We've already done some community work in the past, and I can't speak with too much authority because I wasn't here, but I can say, which is possibly a reflection on the previous people who ran the festival, that in my first year, we ran into quite a lot of hostility with councils as we went around the country putting on shows. And some people were just accepting, they were doing the show... and some people we really had to talk around them. (...) so I think there was community engagement, but I don't think it was at the level we do it now, where we go into the community and we bring out members of the community and work WITH them.” (interview, 09/06/11)

“We all need to share the same vision basically. So we did that whole visioning exercise last year, the thing that came up with our vision is to transform lives through musical experiences. And that was a team-process, core team process, staff team process... but the board really embraced that, they thought it was fantastic! And it was a really strong statement, very ambitious. Worryingly ambitious! (laughs) But you know, nonetheless, it gives us something to aim for and I think that's what the board really liked about it.” (interview, 15/06/11)

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