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Transcending Organization in Temporary Systems: Aesthetics' Organizing Work and Employment in Creative Industries

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Iben Sandal Stjerne

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AESTHETICS' ORGANIZING WORK AND EMPLOYMENT IN CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

PhD School in Organisation and Management Studies

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CBS  COPENHAGEN BUSINESS SCHOOL
HANDELSHØJSKOLEN

Transcending organization in temporary systems

Aesthetics' organizing work and employment in Creative Industries

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Abstract

Because of their temporary nature, work and employment in project based organizations are different from what we used to see in traditional organizational forms. Temporary employment, entailing less stability within the organization changes how employment and work are organized. Temporary systems are organized by transcending organization that go beyond the individual firm and replaces what used to be organized inside the firm. Following several calls for further research on these topics, this dissertation is a small step along the way as it investigates how work and employment are organized in temporary systems that lack stability and formal order. It advances our understanding of transcending organization in creative industries by adopting a practice based perspective.

Empirically, the dissertation presents an in-depth study of the Danish film industry, which is an extreme case of a project based industry wherein temporary organizing dominates and challenges people to organize employment and work in new ways. The study draws on both ethnographic work and interviews conducted in the period from 2009-2015. The data set consist of 40 in-depth interviews of career trajectories with successful film workers with different functional roles and six months of ethnographic study of film projects in the Danish film industry, in particular delving into the film project *Antboy* and its sequels.

The findings of this study show that work and employment is organized through aesthetics that transcend formal organizations providing order for and influencing outcomes like who gets a job, how work is practiced, how people judge performances, and how people learn, develop and refine aesthetics over the course of careers. The findings of this dissertation presented in three papers shed light on three different aspects of how the transcending organization of aesthetics organizes work and employment in the Danish film industry. The first paper explores the role of aesthetics in HR selection processes that match people to

projects and vice versa according to taste. The second paper looks at the organizing of employment from the individual's perspective as it explores how people learn, refine and develop taste and thereby aesthetic, artistic practices over the course of careers. The third paper delves into the relationship between a permanent organization and a series of temporary organizations whose *raison d'être* is to challenge existing aesthetic boundaries of the Danish film industry while enabling the permanent organization to survive.

The theoretical contributions of this dissertation speak to three distinct streams of literature: creative industries, practice based theory, and project based organizations. This dissertation provides a deeper understanding of how work and employment are organized in industries wherein aesthetics play an essential role. It furthermore brings work back into the debate about aesthetics and aesthetic boundaries. The dissertation contributes to practice based theory by advancing our understanding of how practices change through refinement. Furthermore it expands research on aesthetics in practice based studies. Methodologically, it provides insight into how to conduct a practice based study with aesthetic focus. Finally, this dissertation contributes to research on project based organizations by shedding light on the transcending organization that provides order and structure to project based industries despite their temporary nature.

The dissertation also offers practical implications. For practitioners in creative industries, this research offers a better understanding of the aesthetics that transcend formal organizations providing order for their work, learning opportunities and careers. For practitioners from project based organizations, the findings of this dissertation provide essential insights into the formation of project teams in the context of the more permanent organization and field in which they are embedded. For practitioners in traditional firms within the new economy, this

study offers new ideas on how to navigate temporary organizing, which is now a challenge that most managers face.

Danish Summary

På grund af projektbaserede organisationers midlertidige karakter, er arbejdet og det der organiserer ansættelsesforhold forskelligt fra det vi plejede at se i traditionelle organisationsformer. I projektbaserede organisationer, hvor den stabile kerne af virksomheden kun udgør få personer, kan stabilitet og organisering ikke tages for givet. Folk hyres ind på temporære kontrakter når et projekt starter op, og forlader igen organisationen, når projektet slutter. På trods af denne temporalitet der hele tiden afbryder en af firmaet internt informeret organisering, er folk i stand til at praktisere deres arbejde i projekterne, træffe informerede valg der 'passer ind'. I denne afhandling argumenterer jeg for at denne viden, der informerer og er indlejret og reproduceret i praksis, organiseres via transcenderende organisation der rækker udover det enkelte firma og erstatter det der plejede at blive organiseret i den enkelte virksomhed. Transcenderende organisation er det som skaber stabilitet og muliggør arbejde i disse temporære systemer. Gennem Den Danske Filmbranche, belyses hvordan æstetik i netop denne sammenhæng er et eksempel på transcenderede organisation, og hvordan dette udspiller sig i praksis i henholdsvis selektionspraksisser, karrierpraksis og i arbejdet i projekter.

Empirisk præsenterer denne afhandling en dybdegående undersøgelse af den danske filmbranche, som repræsenterer en ekstrem case af en projekt-baseret industri, hvori temporær organisering dominerer og udfordrer folk til at organisere ansættelse og arbejde på nye måder. Denne afhandling trækker på både etnografisk arbejde og interviews udført i perioden 2009-2015. Datasættet består af 40 dybdegående interviews af karriere baner med succesfulde film arbejdere spredt over funktionelle roller samt 6 måneders etnografisk studie af filmprojekter i den danske filmbranche, med specifikt fokus på filmprojektet Antboy og dens efterfølgere Antboy II og III.

Resultaterne af denne afhandling viser, at arbejde og ansættelser er organiseret gennem æstetiske transcenderende organisationer, der beror på for eksempel; hvem der får jobbet, hvordan arbejdet praktiseres, hvordan folk bedømmer præstationer, samt hvordan mennesker lærer, udvikler og forfiner smag gennem karriereforløb. Resultaterne af denne afhandling præsenteres i tre papers der belyser tre forskellige aspekter af, hvordan transcenderende organisering med fokus på æstetik, organiserer arbejdet og ansættelse i den danske filmbranche. Det første paper vedrører, hvordan æstetik er en naturlig del af HR udvælgelsesprocessen, når der matcher mennesker og projekter i henhold til deres smag. Det andet paper ser på organiseringen af ansættelser fra et individ perspektiv ved at udforske hvordan individer lærer, raffinerer og udvikler smag i løbet af en karriere. Det tredje paper dykker ned i forholdet mellem en permanent organisation og en række af dens midlertidige organisationer, hvis raison d'etre er at udfordre eksisterende æstetiske grænser i den danske filmbranche, samtidig med at sikre overlevelse for den permanente organisation.

De teoretiske bidrag i denne afhandling taler til tre forskellige litterære områder; kreative industrier, praksis baseret teori og projektbaserede organisationer. Til forskningen i kreative industrier udvider denne afhandlings resultater vores forståelse af hvordan arbejde og ansættelse organiseres i kreative industrier gennem æstetisk som er et eksempel på transcenderende organisation i disse brancher. Det bringer desuden arbejdet tilbage til debatten om æstetik og æstetiske grænser. Til praksis- baseret teori udvider denne afhandling vores forståelse af hvordan praksisser forandres. Dertil udvides forskningen om æstetisk i praksis baserede undersøgelser. Metodologisk giver denne undersøgelse indsigt i, hvordan man gennemfører en praksis baseret undersøgelse. Til forskning i projektbaserede organisationer bidrager denne forskning baseret på en ekstrem case, til en dybere

forståelse af hvordan transcenderende organisation skaber orden og struktur i projekt-baserede brancher på trods af deres midlertidige karakter.

De empiriske bidrag fra denne afhandling er relevante for praktikere i kreative industrier, praktikere fra projekt-baserede virksomheder samt til praktikere i mere traditionelle virksomheder i den nye økonomi. Denne forskning kan informere kreative medarbejdere om hvordan æstetik som transcenderende organisation skaber muligheder og begrænsninger for deres læring, arbejde og karrierer. Til praktikere fra projektbaserede organisationer, giver resultaterne af denne afhandling information omkring dannelsen af projektgrupper og deres relation til den mere permanent organisation samt de mere permanente organisationer de er indlejret i. Til praktikere i traditionelle virksomheder i den nye økonomi giver denne forskning indsigter der kan anvendes til at navigere i en økonomi, hvor midlertidighed nu er en udfordring som ledere er nødt til at håndtere.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Transcending organization in creative industries

This dissertation seeks to extend our understanding of transcending organization that provides a permeating informal order beyond and across firms in creative industries.

By transcending organization I mean composite structures that have a constancy that warrants the label "organization", as they are both organized in the sense that the structures are the product of human activities or practices that often couple and reinforce these structures, and these composite structures in turn organize activities or practices. As the phrase "transcending organization" connotes, transcending organization transcends or cuts across organizations as we commonly understand them, similar to the way we conceive of how culture and institutions transcend organizations (Scott, 1981). This dissertation addresses the issues and responds to several calls for further understanding about what creates structural order and stability for workers and employment relations in the new economy, characterized by temporary arrangements and rapid change (Cappelli & Keller, 2013; Sydow, 2009; Haunschild, 2004; Eikhof, 2014). Understanding this phenomenon better is what this dissertation sets to do through extensive research on a creative industry that provides extreme examples of temporary or 'project-based' systems (Sydow, 2009). What we know from research on creative industries, is that work and employment relations are organized in social practices transcending organizations and projects (Eikhof, 2014; Starkey, Barnatt & Tempest, 2000; Haunschild, 2003; Sydow, 2009). Looking at organizing beyond the firm is essential for understanding how work is organized in industries wherein temporary organizing is prominent, lacking by-the-firm organized work routines, and informal rules of the employment that cannot be exhaustively described in an employment contract.

Project-based organizations are different from traditional firms because of the great number of temporary arrangements; most activities are carried out in projects and the majority of the work tasks are carried out by freelancers who are external to the firm and hired in on a temporary basis for the projects (Whitley 2006; Sydow & Staber, 2002; Sydow, 2009). As a result of these temporary arrangements, routines and stable work relations are neither enabled within the context of the firm nor within the single project. The question is if this then means that routines and work relation remains unorganized, entailing lack of knowledge, informal rules of the game and ways of doing things? If this was truly the case work would be severely inefficient as every aspect of the work relation would have to be negotiated every time a new project was initiated. Without transcending organization work would be performed inefficiently as this would result in the need to establish a new order in every new project because of a lack of shared language, common interests and procedures (Lanzara, 1999). Furthermore, everybody would have to learn the rules of the game for practicing at work which would make projects inefficient.

This has implications and challenges of creating sufficient stability in the form of routines, knowledge and stable relations that help organizations master tasks efficiently to a high quality that guarantee reliability accountability, and legitimacy of the firm (see for examples: Hannan & Freeman, 1984; Scott, 2001; Johnson, 2007 in Sydow, 2009). Time is essential for activities to be learned and stabilized into knowledge that can be reenacted by knowledgeable practitioners which stabilizes actions into social practices of “ways of doing things” (Gherardi, 2015). These matters are less problematic in traditionally organized firms that are strategically designed to be long lived; the majority of workers are permanent employees, providing a more stable knowledge base. The employment relationships in traditional firms are based on resource interdependencies anchored

in tight formal contracts and informal shared views and norms embedded in the organizational culture. Project based industries' temporary nature implies that they lack managerial control and power over the transcending organization that set the scope for work and employment which are organized at an industry level.

Transcending organization (Eikhof, 2014) provide knowledge for how to practice and the boundaries for what are acceptable behavior and what is not within a specific art world (Becker, 1982). Because film workers have learned and in doings that constantly enacts and change these practices, practicing work art worlds change and with them also transcending organization. In order to understand what organizes work in creative industries it is essential to look beyond the firm. Jörg Sydow, Lars Lindkvist and Robert DeFillippi (2004) stated in their introduction to a special issue on project-based organization that: “*Project-based organizations need to include organizational forms that reach beyond intra-organizational and organizational levels of analysis*” (1476).

The notion of transcending organizations also described as transorganizations (Eikhof, 2014) that are conceived as “happening in and in relation to, but simultaneously transcending from organizations” (Eikhof, 2014: 276). This notion implies a perspective that first of all rethinks the role of the firm in organizing work and “the rules of the game.” Individuals operate both within the firm and with structures and rules that go beyond the traditional employment relationship. Early scholarly research on organization theory understood organizations as entities, consisting of the legally defined assemblages of resources (Engwall, 1981). In contrast organizations are now seen as rather amorphous and open entities (Vikkelsø, 2014; Scott, 1981). Transcending organization and the concept of organization developed and applied in this dissertation differ from both stances. In the next section I will briefly explain this perspective that like other recent process oriented theories seeks to break with predefined categorization (Latour,

1996) but differing from those also sets to explain the role of stability as a transcending order. Organizations are not just aggregates of free floating atoms that stick together briefly. They might have a fluid core but they are based on knowledge that provides stability and allow routines and rules of work. This understanding of transcending organization concurs with Alain Touraine's concept of social movement (1985) as an ordering but dynamic force of which at any time we only see partial manifestations in the empirical world. In this dissertation I shift from Touraine's original focus on understanding societies to instead looking at industries but the basic sociological conceptualization is the same. When looking at complex orders such as transcending organization, it is never possible to understand or explain their full complexity at once (Touraine, 1985; Schatzki, 2016). Only the manifestations of the organization and the effects become clear to identify and explain. An example is explaining Copenhagen Business School. It contains of various diverse activities and units and is too complex to describe in detail. Much stability is part of and regenerated by temporary systems, although this can be conceived of as residing at an industry level. It is just more difficult to see them because they take other forms than what we are used to in traditional firms.

Until now research on transcending organization in creative industries is a fairly unexplored academic field. Few scholars have come up with concepts that explore and emphasize different aspects of the transcending organization. The first research focus is on the transient structures residing in the social networks conceptualized as *latent organizations* based on research from the UK TV industry (Starkey, Barnatt & Tempest, 2000) or a similar concept *latent networks* (Sedita, 2008) which extends this understanding to how different sized companies utilize latent networks in a study of the Italian music industry. The second research focus within the research on transcending organization is on the persisting collaborations conceptualized as *semi-permanent work groups* (Blair, 2003) showing how despite

being employed on a freelance basis into various projects over time, there is a pattern that people tend to reassemble the same team for different projects over time. Third research focus is on employment relationships based on transient organizations or interorganizational ties between artists that are crucial for recruitment and for achieving recognition and other HRM related aspects (Cadin, Guerin & Defillippi, 2006; Haunschild, 2003, 2004; Jones, 1996; Blair, 2003; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009; Menger, 1999, 2001; Sutton, 2001; Slavich & Montanari, 2009). Reward systems reside within the latent organizations as both freelancers and companies need to perform well in order to be recommended to future collaboration partners (Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009). Professional roles are another important aspect of transcending organization of work (Baker & Faulkner, 1991; Bechky, 2006). A study from the US film industry showed the importance of living up to role expectations performing the attendant behavior whereby enthusiasm, gratitude, polite reprimands and humor is acceptable behavior, while anger and is unacceptable and perceived unprofessional (Bechky, 2006) and the need to be a “pub person” in the UK music industry (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011). Learning to become a practitioner and being evaluated by other practitioners while practicing as an insider or outsider is based on the aesthetics residing in the practice (Becker, 1982). These studies all provide a ground for understanding the transcending organization in creative industries. However, this body of literature is still underdeveloped and needs further elaboration (Cappelli & Keller, 2013; Eikhof, 2014). This dissertation sets to contribute to this literature gap by taking on a practice based perspective, and by explaining how daily work practices create and reenact and change transcending structural orders. In this, aesthetics are essential to transcending organization that organizes work and create order, routines and semi-stable work relations.

Studying transcending organizations from a practice based perspective

This dissertation follows the ‘epistemic-normative perspective’ (Geiger, 2009) of the practice based studies, which implies that activities are seen as socially embedded into normative socially constructed practices (Gherardi, 2001) and hence the epistemology of the perspective that this dissertation adopts understands practices from “within,” taking the practitioners point of view which implies centering on “...the activity that is being performed, with its temporality and processuality, as well as the emergent and negotiated order of the action being done” (Gherardi, 2009: 117). The practice based perspective takes practices as the unit of analysis and by that it breaks with the predefined theoretical constructs of individual, organization, field (Schatzki, 2015). Linking transcending organization to the notion of social practices they are thus socially embedded normative structures that provide immediate guidance for behaviors of practitioners (Bechky, 2006) and through judgement they socially define the right behavior. From a practice based perspective, knowing and practicing are ontologically inseparable, as the first depends on the latter to exist and vice versa (Gherardi, 2011). Practices provide knowledge to practitioners that functions as a prerequisite for practicing work knowledgeably and allow people to collaborate (Gherardi, 2011). The practice based epistemology entails a relational understanding which “implies that we seek to understand the emergence of relations through ongoing interactions and their normative stabilization” (Gherardi, 2011: 52).

There is an overlooked and hidden potential in bringing together social practice theory and creative industries research for attaining a deeper understanding of the current theoretical gap on transcending organization that organize work in creative industries. Social practices are per se a kind of informal transcending organization that is linked to the abilities of practitioners and the work performed. The practice based perspective enables contributions to the theories of transcending

organization as it bridges traditional dualisms between micro- macro, agency-structure, material and human, providing answers to how change happens and how stability emerges in project based industries. Creative industries researchers have in recent years discussed the challenges of organizing in temporary systems going beyond the firm. The creative industries have opened up this important debate through concepts such as; transorganizations (Eikhof, 2014, latent organizations (Starkey et al. 2000) and semi-permanent work groups (Blair, 2003). As a result of the organizing power of interpersonal relationships in creative industries, contractual and standard employment systems play a less organizing role of work in practice (Haunschild & Eikhof, 2009). As explained by Caves (2000): *“Most contracts in creative industries have strong incomplete incentive provisions. The contracts are commonly simple and they evade complete contracts needed to describe each input or action ex ante or monitoring it ex post”* (Caves, 2000:13). Organizational practices engage, develop and shape art worlds and link directly into those orders in which employers have less control than usual (Eikhof, 2014). Despite a slowly growing body of literature on transcending organization that provide stable relations for work in creative industries, most of these theories lack depth of connecting the order of transcending organizations to analysis of how work is practiced and the opportunities, challenges and tensions that appear through working with transcending structures for learning and the knowledge of practitioners.

Stabilization of practices and their institutionalization happen as a result of knowledge being manifested into a professional vision of practitioners, i.e. *“When material representations are codified following the embedded moral, ethical and aesthetic code of the practice”* (Gherardi, 2011: 53). Knowledge is learned through the process of becoming a practitioner which requires participation until *“the ways of doing things”* consolidate into embodied knowledge. Practitioners learn a ‘professional vision’ enabling and directing what

they see and how they judge it. As much knowledge is embodied aesthetic judgement and is essential e.g. the baker feeling if the dough has the right consistency, the traditional example of flute makers knowing if a flute sounds right, adapting it according to the sound until its perfect (Cook & Yanow 1993), practice of judging safety on a construction site, knowing exactly how much weight the crane can lift by feeling its sway (Gherardi & Nicolini, 2002), selecting the right roof stripper by watching people move on the roof (Strati, 2007). Practices are based on tacit knowledge that enables people to judge and act. Aesthetic judgement is inherently part of every practice (Gherardi, 2009, 2012). It is a tacit knowledge based on exciting taste embedded within the practice, reenacted by practitioners who set the boundaries for the aesthetics of the practice defining good from bad taste and insiders from outsiders (Becker, 1982). Since much knowledge is embodied and tacit, and people often recognize the world through their senses, a practice-based perspective implies taking the aesthetics seriously.

Aesthetics is as a way of experiencing the world through the senses (Baumgarten, 1998; Dewey, 1934; Strati, 2009) learned from prior experiences and are embedded into the cultural (Mears, 2014). Following John Dewey, aesthetics is defined as an intense and special impactful experience that has been felt and lived and perceived through the senses in everyday lives (Dewey, 1934). Aesthetics are inherently embedded in all practices setting up “rules” and certain ways of performing a practice that makes it look, sound, smell, feel or taste right and allowing it to be judged by people from within the same practice. Aesthetics are even more essential in creative industries. First, these industries’ products by nature are aesthetic (Caves, 2000). Second, much creative work involves constant aesthetic judgements that defines and sets the boundaries for acceptable behavior within an art world (Becker, 1982). Thirdly, aesthetics is a transient transcending

order, embedded in practices in creative industries. Bridging aesthetics and practices, Gherardi (2009) introduces the notion of taste-making. Gherardi defined taste-making as follows: “ *...A collective, emergent discursive process that constantly refines practices, and which is done by saying, and which is said by doing... (it is) distinguish(ed) analytically (in)...* ” *three processes internal to taste-making and present them in separate sections: sharing a vocabulary for appraisal; crafting identities within epistemic communities; and refining performances*” (2009: 536). This understanding inspired and excited my interest and led to the following research questions outlined in the next section.

Research Questions

As touched upon above, the main perspective of this dissertation is that aesthetics are inherently part of every practice as aesthetic knowledge is a way of describing the tacit knowledge which cannot be separated from the social practices per se; implying an aesthetic experience of the world providing a way of knowing in practice (Dewey, 1934; Gherardi, 2009). Practices are always transcendent and multi-sited (Schatzki, 2002) which implies that this perspective seeks to shed light on the phenomenon transorganizations that organize as a replacement of the firm based rules of employment and work (Eikhof, 2014; Haunschild, 2003, 2004). Solving this puzzle discussed within the literature on project based organizations (Sydow, 2009) requires posing the question of what provides stability in temporary systems. In this sense, the debate went on to discuss these same challenges within creative industries and the puzzle of how employment is organized in the absence of permanent structures and stability (Eikhof, 2014, Haunschild & Eikhof, 2009; Haunschild 2003, 2004). This has just recently initiated a debate that I contribute to in this dissertation: namely a debate on how work and employment is organized in creative industries? This will be elaborated in a literature review in chapter 3 in this dissertation. Understanding the

organizing social practices of work and employment from a practice based perspective and more specifically a taste making perspective has excited my interest in a collective, emergent discursive process and leads to the following question:

How does the aesthetics embedded in practices organize employment and work in creative industries?

The practice based perspective implies also looking at change and stabilization of practices in the emerging knowledge of practitioners. I seek further to understand how change in employment and work is organized through aesthetics.

This question is answered by shedding light on three different essential aspects of how aesthetic practices provide transcending organization that stabilize work and employment:

1. Selection based on practitioners' ability to judge aesthetics.
2. Practitioners learning, refining and abandoning practices over the course of careers.
3. Aesthetic boundary work in and between projects and its more permanent organization and the sites in which it is embedded.

The first focus, selection provides essential explanations to what aesthetic knowledge resides in the selection practices that organize who gets the job and how. This implies understanding how it is possible to judge and evaluate practitioners' tastes and match them to projects and teams. The puzzle that this implied is judging an intrinsic skill that is hard to discursively express as well as predefine according to a premature idea that might become a project at a later point in time.

Selecting people with the “right” taste from the beginning is essential for project survival and successful collaborations. This is not an easy task since aesthetic skills such as tastes are intrinsic skills that are sensed, felt and experienced and hard to discursively express because language built on logics and science is impoverished for the sense-based and richness of the experienced aesthetic world (Shusterman, 2006). This leaves recruiters of creative workers in a difficult situation as the skills needed for an innovative product cannot be predefined, aesthetic skills are hard to describe and discuss with colleagues in the search for the right candidate, and tastes cannot be measured or looked up in any database. This raises the first research question of this dissertation, which will be taken further and researched in the first of the three papers of this dissertation:

1. *RQ1: How are creative workers selected based on their aesthetic skills such as taste?*

The second focus on careers is a way of shedding light on the way individual practitioner’s attachment and detachment from different practices over time. Careers are outcomes of ‘*taste making*’ (Gherardi, 2009) wherein the role of taste is conceptualized in the process of learning to become a practitioner. The first step is *mobilizing sensible knowledge* by first feeling taste, without being able to verbally express it (this is an individual aesthetic experience). Second is *learning to express taste* through a shared vocabulary for appraisal, constructed between practitioners allowing them to speak and share aesthetic knowledge collectively through non-rational, emotional, and “evocative expressive modalities, recalling a state of mind by assonance” (Gherardi, 2012). Third is learning how to practice or use the ‘right’ taste within the community, and fourth is refining taste (Gherardi, 2009). Practices are performed over the course of career, raising the question:

RQ2: How do people learn, refine, attach and detach from artistic practices over the courses of careers?

The third focus centers on aesthetic boundary work. Aesthetics is, as already stated, important for practitioners in creative industries as it forms the foundation for aesthetic decisions that feed in to the making of the final aesthetic product (Caves, 2000). Managing aesthetics is a matter performing boundary work e.g. pushing aesthetic boundaries. As argued before aesthetics is a strong organizer of creative industries providing aesthetic boundaries of genres, styles and reputations (Lena, 2004, 2009, 2012; Zuckerman et al., 2003; Svejenova, 2005) and art worlds (Becker, 1982) as well as collaborations, jobs and careers (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2014). This makes it essential to understand how organizations manage work when transitions in the social practices are intended through boundary work in a project.

The last paper takes an organizational perspective, zooming in on the boundary work practiced within an innovative project that bridges differing aesthetic practices. This initial focus on aesthetic boundaries was through the review process of this publication set in the background, and is in its current version latent, yet essential within the case where you will see how a new practice emerge in the practices resided within sequels of project. This paper show how learning, refining and stabilizing of new practices are performed- when deliberately seeking to play with aesthetic boundaries and the tensions that this entailed. Also the relationship between the project and the permanent organization is essential as attachment and detachment happens as a result of boundary work on aesthetics. and who were able to interpret and bridge the two art worlds (taking on a boundary role)? This led to the following research question:

RQ3: How are temporary organizations integrated into, or separated from, the permanent organizations in which they are embedded? What tensions does that connectedness entail and what outcomes does it lead to? What boundary work and boundary roles are involved in the process?

Relevance of studying transcending organization in creative industries

Today the new economy¹ has implied a great change towards temporary organizing as a result of demands for technological development, the knowledge economy, financial pressure and a demand for agile organizing (Child, 2015; Kalleberg, 2001). Despite the many important benefits of routines and permanent relations in traditional organizations, the downside of persistency, rigidity and inertia, is the lack of adaptability and flexibility required in order for organizations to survive in turbulent environments requiring flexibility, agility and keeping overheads low because of unpredictable market needs and demand.

The new economy has led to a higher degree of project based and temporary arrangements wherein “Over a fifth of U.S. workers, and even more globally, now perform economic work under arrangements that differ from full-time regular employment” (Cappelli & Keller, 2013:575). This is an increasing tendency stated by various researchers over the past 20 to 30 years (Anderson and Pontusson, 2007; Beck, 2000; Blossfeld et al., 2011; Boeri and Garibaldi, 2009; Bosch et al., 2009; Breen, 1997; Guest et al., 2010; Hacker et al., 2013; Kalleberg, 2000, 2009). The temporary arrangements entailed in the new economy have also caused the tendency towards boundaryless or protean careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996; Hall, 1994) implying that careers are no longer happening inside the organization

¹ An empirically emerging concept initiated in a 1983 cover article in Time magazine, "The New Economy" by Charles P. Alexander Monday, The concept implies the transition from heavy industry to a new technology based economy.

but instead between organizations and occupations, which has been a known phenomenon in the creative industries for many years because of the freelance structure. Another essential change is in skill development and talent management which has moved from being the responsibility of the firm to being put in the hands of the individuals themselves to gain access and learn the desired and needed skills (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009).

Although project based arrangements are fairly new to most industries this mode of organizing has been the prominent way of organizing for many years in creative industries. In new flexible organizations there has been an increase in project organizations and resultantly more temporary and non-standard employment (Kalleberg, 2000; Cappelli & Keller, 2013). Creative industries and in particular the film industry, on which this dissertation centers, can be understood as extreme cases for temporary arrangements and project based organizations (Jones 1996; Ebbers & Wijnberg 2009). Because transcending organization is more progressed in these industries, much can be learned from studying transcending organization in creative industries. Within the film industry these changes already began in the 1950^s wherein the entire US industry changed from a mass production system with permanent studio employees to flexible specialization making the majority of workers freelancers. Creative industries have over the past two decades been depicted as extreme cases of organizing and managing because of their distinctive, yet gradually more common, characteristic of the new economy (Langham, 1996) wherein efficiency, adaptability and flexibility have been paramount (Volberda & Lewin, 2003). However, these industries have many common traits with other industries “*as they give rise to environmental conditions-in particular, high levels of ambiguity and dynamism-which are increasingly common in other industries*” (Lampel, Lant & Shamsie, 2000: 268) not least the challenges of permanency and stability within temporary arrangements which is an increasing challenge that

occurs as a result of organizing for agility and flexibility in the new economy (Child, 2015). This tendency is an argument for the broader relevance and importance of studying transcending organization in creative industries as we need to know more about this in order to prepare for the new ways of organizing that increasingly encompass and possibly predict an increasing future tendency. Before outlining the dissertation and moving on to the next chapter I will briefly introduce the central concepts on which this dissertation is based.

Clarification of central concepts

Creative industries

Despite conflicting opinions about what sectors should and should not be recognized as belonging to the “creative industries” (see for example the differences between Hesmondhalgh, 2007; Caves, 2000; and Hirsch, 1972) there seems to be agreement on minimum following sectors: advertising, crafts, architecture, design, fashion, music, TV, film, performing arts, publishing and some even include software (Howkins, 2001; Caves, 2000). In defining creative industries one must consider and take a stance on the width and the breadth of the concept. This has been an ongoing debate the past years with many new industries being included over time such as architecture (Jones, Maoret, Massa, & Svejenova, 2012; Jones & Massa, 2013), fashion (Mears, 2014; Aspers & Godart, 2013; Khaire, 2014), design (Ravasi & Stigliani, 2012), haute cuisine food (Svejenova, Mazza, & Planellas, 2007) and games (Tschang, 2007; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). I will not settle and list the industries but take a more sociological stance to this question. Following Becker (1982) art worlds are constantly defined and redefined from within, likewise the scope of what belongs to creative industries is not a constant, and it changes over time as it is defined and redefined both by scholars and others externally. As this dissertation is based

on the film industry which is a traditional setting and broadly accepted as belonging to the creative industries, I consider this debate of less relevance to the scope of this dissertation, while at the same time secure in calling the film industry a creative industry.

Creative worker

A second issue similar to that of defining creative industries is taking a stance on who is considered creative and who is not. Art production is a hodgepodge of various artistic workers' input (Becker, 1982), including both the obviously creative key functions and the back stage, office staff, technical staff and people promoting and selling the creative product (Pratt, 2005). The difficulty in distinguishing creatives from non-creatives is that it, like the first above mentioned stance differentiating between utilitarian and aesthetic/experience products, creativity can also be placed on a continuum as creative elements are part of almost any contemporary job. In solving this problem I refer to Trine Bille's (2012) distinction between creative industry, creative education, and creative job function. If we delimit the research to creative industries, the problem is that only 16 % of the workers in creative industries hold a creative job function. If we delimit it to educational background, statistics from the Danish labor force shows that only 28% of people working in a creative job function have a creative education and only 20% of people who hold a creative education work in a creative job function. Hence education seems to not matter that much. If we delimit the concept of creative worker to job function "we get a definition of creative labour saying 'you are what you do'" (Bille, 2012: 60). This implies that this definition does not delimit to the creative industries (Bille, 2012). The purpose of defining this is mainly relevant to the second paper on careers, for the purpose of understanding who the group we talk about is. In this case since it is artistic and

not creative careers, we have delimited this further to those working as a main occupation in producing art within the creative industries.

Organizing and organization

In this dissertation I use the concept organization in two different ways. The first way is the conventional meaning connoting an establishment or firm which I, in keeping with my theoretical orientation, substantively see as a set of activities and practices that by the practitioners is formalized legally and given a name that defines and provides boundaries to the establishment or firm. The second meaning of organizing which is the most frequently used term in this dissertation is the conceptual understanding of organization as a bundle of activities that aggregate into a social practice. An organization is an outcome of the organizing, wherein practitioners reenact practices. It is constantly in the making and refined through the mere fact that nothing can ever be practiced the exact same way. Despite that organizations in the first sense are fairly stable entities because practitioners' knowledge and the socially acceptable and within the practice community is a learned judgement. In order to judge and recognize a set of activities as belonging to a certain practice, it needs to somehow conform to the normative and aesthetic code of conduct. As stated by Gherardi: "A practice is not recognizable outside of its intersubjectively created meaning, and what makes possible the competent reproduction of a practice over and over again and its refinement while being practiced (or its abandonment) is the constant negotiation of what is thought to be a correct or incorrect way of practicing within the community of practitioners." (Gherardi, 2009: 536)

Organizations are bundles of practices that intersect from practitioners practicing at different sites. As a result organizations consist of practices, but they are never

neatly defined entities. As a result the scope of the organizations from a practice based perspective is empirically defined but they are almost always transcending as practices are entangled and sites are embedded in other sites

Aesthetics and taste

According to Richard Shusterman (2006) aesthetics has evolved conceptually through three different axes; one juxtaposing aesthetics to the realm of fine art (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel), a second that connects aesthetics with beauty and the sublime in nature (Emanuel Kant), and a third as sensory perception of the everyday world (Baumgarten, 1998) or an everyday aesthetic way experiencing the world (John Dewey). In this dissertation I use the broader concept of aesthetics as a way of experiencing the world (Baumgarten, 1998; Dewey, 1934). Following the last of the conceptual axes, linking to the academic work of John Dewey, aesthetics is defined as an intense and special impactful experience that has been felt and lived and perceived through the senses in everyday lives (Dewey, 1934). Practitioners learn aesthetics through experiencing while practicing in the process of learning to become a practitioner (Hennion, 1993, 2001; Teil, 1998; Gomart and Hennion, 1999; Teil & Hennion, 2004; Hennion, 2007). Aesthetics are inherently embedded in all practices setting up “rules” and certain ways of performing a practice that makes it look, sound, smell, feel or taste right and allowing it to be judged by people from within the same practice.

This links to Gherardi’s concept taste-making defined as: “*a collective, emergent discursive process that constantly refines practices, and which is done by saying, and which is said by doing*” (Gherardi, 2009: 536). Taste-making, “a situated activity that rests on learning and knowing how to appraise specific performances of a practice” (Gherardi, 2009: 538) is distinguished into three analytical foci: 1) sharing a vocabulary for appraisal; 2) crafting identities within epistemic

communities; and 3) refining performances. This perspective will be elaborated further in the next chapter.

Project

A project is more specifically conceptualized as a temporary organization defined by four parameters: 1) Time is limited and it exists for a limited time and, normally, its determination point is well known from the beginning. 2) Team, is assembled by people from various organizations with differing expertise, understandings and practices. 3) Task, differ from the routines found within the permanent organization and are often new to team, however they can differ from 'one time' events to more standardized tasks. 4) Transition or change in the world or organization is the main goal, purpose and legitimacy of the project. (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995).

Careers

The more contemporary concept of boundaryless career (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) widens the concept to a trans-organizational phenomenon beyond the scope of the single firm and is defined as: 'The evolving sequence of a person's work experiences over time' (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996: 8). Others have emphasized the collective aspects of careers (Tams & Arthur, 2010; Svejenova et al, 2010). From a sensemaking perspective Karl Weick showed how careers are sense-making of work experiences, and career success implies the ability to make sense of the messiness of work experiences (Weick, 1996). From a practice based perspective careers are an outcome of various work related practices that links into the individual's work practices, opportunities, strategies, expressions and experiences developed over sequential work over time. More narrowly looking at artistic careers form a taste-making perspective (see second paper in this dissertation)

careers can be understood as the ability for the self to learn, develop, express, refine and sometimes discard taste in different work settings over time.

Knowledge, learning and skills

Knowledge from a practice based perspective is *per se* always ‘practical knowledge’. It is embedded in practitioners and takes a tacit form. Hence the sensible and aesthetic dimension plays a big role in this perspective on learning, knowledge and skills. Learning is not a phenomenon that takes place in a person’s head but instead a participative social process. It is what makes people able to act competently in practice and know what is right and wrong behavior. Knowledge and practices are in Gherardi’s (2011) optic inseparable – what people know is the practice. People reenact the practice because of the embedded knowledge of the practice they are part of. Learning is the process of embedding and gaining new insights while practicing which might potentially change the practice/knowledge (Gherardi, 2011).

Wenger (1998) states that the connection between practice and competencies or skills is constituted by learning, because learning in practice is only possible when the experience of meaning interacts with a regime of skills (Wenger, 1998). According to Wenger skills emerge in the social action of practitioners or amateurs practicing and those practices being judged and evaluated. As such skills are neither found within the individual on their own nor within the community as a whole. Skills and knowledge are hence a part of organizing work; it separates good from bad practices, skilled from unskilled practitioners resulting in inclusions and exclusion and boundaries of the practices (Gherardi, 2009). Skill is a ‘label of inclusion,’ a result of practitioners judging the practices performed.

Outline of this dissertation

This dissertation is structured in an article based format with eight chapters. This entails that the dissertation consists of two main parts- a frame (Chapters 1-4 and 8) and three articles or book chapters that comprise the analytical chapters based on empirical research and findings (Chapters 5-7). Given this format, it is unavoidable that some repetitions occur, not least in the methodology wherein in depth descriptions are required for each publication as well as for the frame of this dissertation. I have attempted to reduce this to a minimum.

After this introductory chapter the following Chapter 2 sets to further elaborate on the practice based perspective of this dissertation about transcending organizing in temporary systems. It begins with a more general introduction to the practice based theories after which it elaborates on the understanding of transcending organization from a practice based approach. At the end of this chapter I elaborate and narrow down the practice based perspective to center on the inherently embedded aesthetics within practices, which is the center of the argument of this dissertation.

In Chapter 3 I review the literature on creative industries, starting with an introduction to the more general characteristics of creative industries in order to provide an understanding of the challenges that are present for organizing in these industries. Thus, this chapter comprises reviews the creative industries research that doesn't have its focus on transcending organization within these industries as this has not yet developed into a scholarly debate in its own. As a result of aesthetics being a focal point of this dissertation and a central aspect of work in creative industries, the subsequent part of the literature review outlines the research that turns around aesthetics as a transcending organization in creative industries. Finally, the dissertation's central concepts that have not been defined elsewhere are defined here.

Chapter 4 describes and reflects on the research design utilized to conduct the empirical studies for this dissertation. It begins with a brief presentation of the Danish film industry, introducing the research setting on which this dissertation is based. Because the data of this dissertation was gathered based on two different research designs, I chronologically describe the two methodological designs. At the end of this chapter the research process and my position in producing this knowledge is outlined and critically reflected upon.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 contain three analytical chapters in the form of journal articles/book chapter based on my empirical findings. The articles are presented as independent contributions that shed light on distinct aspects of organizing work in the Danish film industry. The three papers, wherein two of them are published and the third submitted, connect and contribute to different kinds of literature and employ distinct analytical concepts.

In Chapter 5 I present the article ‘Human Resource Selection for Aesthetic Skills’. The article shows how film producers select the film workers based on their tastes for film projects and vice versa. This matching process is performed through taste making practices and aesthetic judgement i.e. imagination, intuition and fascination. These findings reveal the role of aesthetics in HR selection and contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how selection is based on an embedded aesthetic knowledge. The findings of this paper challenge the current literature on HRM selection and add an additionally empirical contribution to research on selection for taste in creative industries.

In Chapter 6 I present the book chapter ‘Artistic practices over careers in film’. This study shows how tastes are learned, refined and abandoned over the courses of careers. This research sheds light on the non-linear relation between the knowledge and learning of practitioners over the course of careers. The findings of this paper show that practitioners can develop too good taste for what they can do with their practical ability and as a result experience a sense of dissonance. These

findings contribute to the research on artistic practices and creative careers by opening up the debate about the role of practicing taste while changing them over the course of artists' careers and as well showing the non-linearity of careers practices.

In Chapter 7 I present the article 'Connecting temporary and permanent organizing; Tensions and boundary work in a series of film projects'. The article investigates the relationship between a permanent organization and a series of temporary organizations. This research draws on an in-depth study of the Danish production company Nimbus Film and its sequel film projects *Antboy* I, II and III. This study show what happens to practitioners when projects attempt to break with and merge two distinct aesthetic practices. This contributes to our understanding of work practices within creative projects. It sheds light on the relation between learning and knowledge when working with project learning that merges two distinct aesthetic practices.

Chapter 8 concludes the dissertation and discusses the findings of the papers in relation to the overall research questions of this dissertation and draws out the implications this has on transcending practices that organize work and employment in creative industries. Last I discuss the quality and limitations of these findings and avenues for future research.

Chapter 2: Social practice theory as a perspective on transcending organization

Since this dissertation is strongly informed by a practice based perspective, more specifically inspired by three main theorists namely Silvia Gherardi, David Nicolini, and Theodor Schatzki, this chapter sets to introduce the practice based perspective and elaborate on my understanding and framework of organizing transcending organization from this perspective. For the sake of conceptual clarity to those readers who are less familiar with this literature, practice theory contains the broad spectrum of theories that I will introduce later on in this chapter going way back to some of the classics such as Bourdieu and Giddens. The more recent notion Practice-Based Studies uses practice theories as a lens or perspective for conducting empirical research. This dissertation primarily follows the practice based studies as a perspective for understanding transcending organization in the film industry and has an empirical research focus. Practice based studies have since Barley and Kunda's (2001) call to "bring work back in" been of increasing interest for management and organization scholars. This perspective is divided into a weak and a strong program (Bloor, 1976), the first providing mere empirical descriptions and the latter seeking to explain organizational matters with recourse to practice theory. My work is in line with the last group of scholars as I include normativity and define practices as mentioned in the first chapter as "ways of doing things around here" (Gherardi 2001). The strong program can be divided further into practice theory as perspective and practice theory as a philosophy wherein "practices are reality" (Orlikowski in Golsorkhi et al. 2010) The main difference between having a perspective versus seeing as a philosophy, is that the first doesn't encounter the social co-construction of the researcher in observing practices. Researchers can never stand outside the practice and observe but will always be practicing by being there interpreting the observations. This is inspired

by double-hermeneutics. The research of this dissertation was initiated from a narrative perspective and inductively taste became an *in vivo* code (Emerson, 1995), that invited in taste making (Gherardi, 2009) and following the practice based approach became an inspiration for posing new questions. While being in the field new research questions emerged empirically during my research (the third paper in this dissertation).

In order to be attentive and open to the empirical, perspectives should never become ‘religions’. However, researchers need a perspective that guides data selection. It is in other words a balancing act, iteratively interacting between theory and data which implies selecting theories that allow the data to unfold providing interesting questions (Davis, 1971; Walsch & Bartunek, 2016). In this dissertation the practice based approach provides a perspective on organizing that helped me to focus on the practices and informed me to emphasize the non- verbal and sensual, including emotions, taste and aesthetics materials (Nicolini, 2013; Gherardi 2009, 2012).

Overall introduction to the practice based perspective

Before moving on to elaborating on how transcending organization can be understood from a practice based perspective this next part introduce the practice based perspective in general.

Practice based theories are far from one unified perspective; however when talking about conducting a practice based study, there is a result of a scholarly consensus on five common traits (Nicolini, Gherardi & Yanow, 2003). The first common trait of all practice theories are they emphasize the importance of setting the activities and actions in the forefront. This entails operating with action verbs using the –ing forms preferring e.g. organizing over organization (Nicolini, Gherardi & Yanow, 2003). However this does not mean that the vocabulary in a

practice based study is always processual as processes represent the reenactment of practices, however the practices themselves are structures embedded within people through knowledge. Both organizing an organization must be equally represented in a practice based study, but since the starting point for analyzing practices are activities the action verbs are the starting point. Practice based theories breaks with the traditional theoretical dualisms such as actor-system, social-material, body-mind, theory-action and last but not least structure and process (Schatzki et al, 2001; Schatzki, 2002; Rekwitz, 2002; Rouse, 2007). Social practice theory bridges the macro-micro divide since it allows us understand the processes of change through actions as an intermediary between what happens inside the individual, things in the making and the non-rational and coincidentally happening with that what gets created. The ontology of a practice based perspective implies an understanding of the world as relational constituted by assemblages of practices, implying a flat ontology, as it is “breaking with theories that postulate separate entities of reality, and the existence of superstructure and similar paraphemia” (Nicolini 2013: 3). Practices are “organized human activities” (Schatzki, 2005: 471) and can be understood as “open-ended spatial-temporal manifolds of actions” (Schatzki, 2005: 471). Some well-known every day examples of practices are for instance cooking, dining and driving.

A second trait in common is the understanding of the human as ‘*homo practicus*’, stemming from pragmatism, wherein the body mind is both a carrier while carrying out social practices. This understanding gives room for initiative, creativity and individual performance, as people draw on both the prior and existing practices while also differing from those because of either the mere fact that people can never reproduce a practice 100% or by people adapting to new circumstances.

A third trait in common is bringing the body and the material to the forefront of the analysis because practices are embodied and experienced in the relation

between bodies and materials. Discourse and mental mind are not forgotten or excluded from the practice based perspective, they are understood as one particular kind of practice of equal importance to all other practices. Mental practices are not just objects or processes of the brain alone but feelings are linked to what the person experiences in the world through practicing, providing a “practical intelligibility” implying that people almost always do what makes sense to them (not in the rational sense) and what that is influenced by the mental mind such as moods, emotions and hopes (Schatzki et al, 2001) based on embodied learned knowledge. A fourth trait of common agreement is on the understanding of knowledge, meaning and discourse. Knowledge is tacit and socially learned in the process of becoming a practitioner through being part of the practices. All practices are learned socially, even though we lose awareness of those practices as they become embodied. An example of this is when we learn a pin code, the first times we tend to think about it and recall the numbers, but over time these numbers are learned by the body and “sits” in our fingers and it can be hard to recall the numbers when thinking about them. A fifth and last commonality of practice based studies is the interest in interests and power because the organizations created by practices provide and hinder people in what they do (Nicolini, 2013). This also leads to an interest in understanding change and innovation of practices.

Practice theory has its roots in various academic sources. Richard Bernstein (1971) points out four different roots of practice: a Hegelian perspective, a Marxist root whose focal point is between idealism and materialism, a root from existentialist writers such as Jean-Paul Sartre and Charles Taylor, and last but not least the tradition stemming from pragmatism by Charles Pierce’s and John Dewey (Bernstein, 1971). Pierce and Dewey are some of the key figures providing insight into the aspect of learning to become a practitioner and as well how

practices are reproduced and renewed in between habits and the interaction between the human body and its environment. Much knowledge is embodied and sensually embedded in practices. Much knowledge is in that way practical and pragmatically learned and understood. The first step in becoming a practitioner involves learning to recognize the practice, for instance the ability to distinguish good from bad taste, later on this develops into a vocabulary that enables practitioners to express and communicate about the aesthetics of their work (Gherardi, 2009) This links with Dewey's notion of aesthetic judgement, which is elaborated in the third paper in this dissertation. Reenacting and renewing practices takes place on a daily basis at work when practitioners based on embedded aesthetic knowledge judge and appraise performances. Aesthetic knowledge that allows judgement and flowingly appraisal and punishment transcends beyond the single firm. Some more recent social practice theorists draw on Wittgenstein and the early writings of Heidegger. Reckwitz for example develops a new body of social practice theory (Reckwitz, 2002). Non-pragmatist researchers such as Theodore Schatzki, Karin Knorr Cetina and Eike Von Savigny (2001) introduce their book by outlining the roots of practice theory as an attempt to break with dualisms. Structuralist systemic thinkers implied that society was reproduced and systems were stable; thereby human actions were reduced to be embedded structures, which made change a big mystery. The opposition to this was humanistic thinkers focusing on human agency, rational choice and free will. Many attempts to break this dualism started in the 1970s, including Giddens structuration theory (1979), Bourdieu's practical reason (1998), both attempts to solve the structure- agency dualism. These are often mentioned as the contemporary progenitors of practice theory within the sociological tradition.

Introducing organizing- organization - and the transcending equivalents from a practice based perspective

As already stated the concept of practices imply an organization of activities, through meaning making, identity forming, and order-producing activities (Chia & Holt, 2008; Nicolini, 2009a, 2013). Practices are social orders or structures that are embedded within individuals and reenacted but also changed in the process of reproduction. A practice based study both looks at the processes and the actions of people using adverbs such as organizing and ordering, while linking these to the social patterns that they are already embedded within (Gherardi, 2011). Practices are orders or organizations as they provide conventions for practitioners defining the right way of practicing, but this order or organization is constantly in the making as it is constantly produced and reproduced and only exist by being enacted by practitioners practicing it (Schatzki et al, 2001). Practices are never just replications but will almost always change and adjust to changes in different sites, changes in other practices occur because of practices overlapping and exerting influence, on others, other new practices taking over, or just by the fact that exact replication of a practice is impossible. This perspective centers on activities and hence is a study of the organizations in their becoming; the question to ask in the matter is “through which mechanisms practices achieve durability in time?” (Nicolini, 2013: 277). This question is a recurring theme of this dissertation described as organizing and organizations.

Practices link the activities of the practice to the social through teleo-affective structures which implies that things are carried out according to a “right way of doing (and saying) things around here” (Gherardi 2009: 535) without limiting them to routines or habits. This is what constitutes organizations. An interesting debate using different metaphors for such activities was found between Turner (1994) and Barnes (2001). Turner (1994) gives the metaphor of riding in a cavalry

where a shared practice is nothing more than habituated individual behavior. Barnes (2001) criticizes this for being either too individualistic or as the opposing structural theories often treat practices as mechanical and automatically enacted, overlooking the importance of asking why human beings enact practices? Practices cease to exist if they are not reenacted by practitioners, and practitioners can in fact decide to stop reenacting a practice, renew it or bridge it with other practices. Barnes reopened the metaphor of riding in cavalry but shows that there is much more agency in this practices, than mere routine and automatic reenacting a practice allows for. He points out that riding in cavalry involves calculation and actively co-adjusting individual actions to the rest of the group which is based on a shared knowledge of when to fire, and how fast to ride forward. Each person actively co-adjust their own actions to the group and to the practice, because they know the practice, but they can decide not to follow the orders of the general. This may not result in the termination of that practice, as there is power and practices that have consolidated and recruited many practitioners, and have the power to exclude “law offenders” of the rules, the norms of the practice. However, practices are not solely limitations and boundaries for people’s actions, they can as well be understood as resources that people can draw on in the course of living their lives (Barnes 2001, Swidler, 2001). Everybody in the cavalry knows that they have to charge on the signal of the commander, as they have learned socially what the signals mean as a collective knowledge. Social practices are collective actions oriented towards the community of practice, yet performed and reenacted by individuals who can reenact, renew or even discard practices (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2014; Swidler 2001).

Knowing and learning are key issues in the understanding of organizing and organization from a practice based perspective as practices can only be reenacted through knowledgeable doings as a collective activity (Gherardi, 2000). Much

knowledge is tacit and embodied and hence learning to become a skilled practitioner through “repeated exposure to clues and sensory experiences provided by the unfolding activity as well as on the linguistic productions that take place during the activity” (Gherardi & Rodeschini, 2015: 270). Learning therefore requires being part of the practices and learning how to reproduce the practice making it aesthetically, ethically, emotionally and materially sound, feel, smell, look and taste right judged by practitioners within the practice. Much knowledge that organizes is located latently within the practice and only knowledgeable practitioners are able to judge if this knowledge is reproduced or not, defining the boundaries of the practice or as such the order or so-called organization of the practice. Taste-making, described in the introduction, connects aesthetic knowledge and learning of these to the practice based perspective and like knowledge aesthetics can be understood as inherent and inseparable from practices and knowledge.

The practice based perspective is of great relevance for understanding organizing and transcending organization for two reasons. The first reason is that it provides a perspective for unfolding the temporal aspect as practices understood as temporally and spatially dispersed nexuses of doing and saying (Schatzki, 1996: 89) emphasizing the temporal while linking them to the activities of people.

Transcending organization is by nature dispersed multiple doings and sayings, going beyond the boundaries or practices of the single firm. Transcending organization is implicitly grand multi-sited orders, a phenomenon that in many aspects could be understood as a grand phenomenon as it is too complex and has several dispersed activities connected to it (Schatzki, 2016). Avoiding predefining these complex orders as something existing “out there”, and in the attempt to describe them they lose their complexity and become distant and strangers to the activities that creates them (Touraine, 1985). Understanding such large phenomena requires a perspective that links them to the activities keeping a certain nearness to

what people do while recognizing the social aspects of this. Transcending organization is in their nature informal and latent. Because of that, transcending structures are more enduring and tenacious than formalized structures, as they are incorporated in the practices and their taken for granted values, permeated in discourses, behavior and inherently also relations, which makes it difficult for individuals to decide not to reenact those structures (Alvesson, 1996).

The second reason for taking on a practice based perspective is that it allows unfolding a new understanding of the informal and tacit forms of knowing that organize creative industries, such as aesthetics that is particularly important in these industries where the product by nature is aesthetic (Caves, 2000). The practice based perspective put forward by Gherardi (2009, 2012) includes aesthetics as an important aspect of knowing and working. In this perspective practices are learned socially to become embodied and hence also taste can be understood as something that must be learned, refined and developed (Gherardi, 2009). Some might say that the concept of boundaries disagrees with the practice based ontology (Nicolini, 2013), but since orders imply boundaries between ‘satisfying’ or ‘disappointing;’ liking and disliking “the way we do things” has empirically defined aesthetic boundaries that delimit what can and cannot be practiced and judged positively within a community of practitioners.

Chapter 3: Literature review on transcending organization in creative industries

As stated earlier in the introduction of this dissertation, creative industries are extreme cases of temporary systems wherein transcending organization becomes the prominent organization form. Changes in society have caused a renewed interest in studying creative industries. Since the mid-90s a number of studies characterizing creative industries have been important in order to define creative industries as an independent and legitimate field of study (Jones, 2001, 2002), which has over time resulted in various works about various topics within creative industries.

Much of the current knowledge on transcending organization lies dispersed within the literature on creative industries. Through a review of this literature on creative industries much of the hidden knowledge sought out from within this literature provides an essential insight to transcending organization. This insight that further elaborates our knowledge on transcending organization within creative industries will be provided here in Chapter 3. The structure of this chapter proceeds as follows: it starts with a broader introduction to the characteristics of creative industries, providing a more general insight into these industries and this research field. Next, current dispersed knowledge on the transcending organization found within this literature will be outlined. Last, this chapter delves into outlining the current knowledge on *aesthetics* as transcending organizers of creative industries.

Characteristics of creative industries

Despite great differences in product, market, production and common identification between creative workers, there are many common traits between the so-called creative industries (Howkins, 2001). The common characteristics of

cultural and creative industries have over the years been studied by scholars from diverse fields of study, and can be categorized into three groups differing on academic background and research foci within the creative industries research. The first group focuses on the nature of the aesthetic product on the market. The second group focuses on the freelance / project based nature of the industry and the organizing of work. The third group of scholars focuses on the managerial challenges of navigating in creative industries, i.e. uncertainty, innovation and last but not least managing creative workers.

The first groups of scholars mentioned above, the market oriented scholars, emphasize the market traits of creative industries, primarily conducting macro analysis. The research conducted by this group overall centers on challenges of managing in relation to consumer markets (Caves, 2000; Howkins, 2001; Hesmondhalgh, 2007; Hartley, 2004). Elaborating on this, some of the distinctive features of importance for market oriented scholars are the strategic management issues highlighting that: 1. *Demand is uncertain*, creative products are experience goods linked to an aesthetic consumption and hence evaluation is based on subjective reactions and as a result nobody ever knows how a creative product will be evaluated, neither by fellow artists nor by consumers when it meets the market (Caves, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). 2. *Art for art's sake* which derives the debate about balancing art and commerce which holds two different and often incompatible logics (Miege, 1987; Caves, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). Artistic work is based on and depends of the artist's taste as an intrinsic judgement. Artistic workers care for the product and the work they create from inner visions, which makes commercial compromises and logics hostile intruders. 3. *High production costs and low reproduction costs* (Hesmondhalgh, 2007) or *Ars longa* (Caves, 2000) implies the high costs of producing a creative product, however reproduction is cheap, which results in a strong dependence of monopolies and

copyrights being respected. Many creative products are durable, which provides an enduring income over time. Even small amounts of money due to copyrights payments etc. leads to small amounts of money adding up to “real money” over time. 4. *The scarcity of resources* (Hesmondhalgh, 2007) as creative industries are often semi-public goods, supported partly by the state money, resulting in a need to create scarcity and create as much value for the money as possible. 5. *Infinite variety* of differentiated products that compete simultaneously for entry to the market, requiring someone to select which play to show or what interpretation of Mozart to proceed with (Caves, 2000; Hirsch, 1972). But because these products are aesthetic experience goods, holding intellectual property as their currency, they cannot be evaluated quantitatively through predefined parameters (Howkins, 2001). These characteristics have been said to result in the following strategies for solving the tensions experienced in the daily work in creative industries: Ensuring returns on investments through copyrights and as optimizing chances for survival through buying up competitors; initiating distribution channels; broadening the scope of creative products they hold; partnering with international companies and making safer investments with stronger market sales orientation by building on existing brands and genres; and hiring stars that attract an audience (Ryan, 1992; Hesmondhalgh, 2007).

The second group of scholars, the organizational scholars, have emphasized the project based nature of creative industries (Whitley 2006; Sydow & Staber, 2002), and the high percentage of freelance workers hired in on a temporary basis for the projects in these industries (Davis & Scase 2000; Menger 1999). Most creative work is carried out in projects (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Jones 2001; Caves 2000;). This has been summed up as “*time flies*” by Richard Caves (2000). The essence of time is very present as most creative work is structured around tight deadlines positioned in projects. Investments and grants are organized around

these structures, making exceeding of the temporal delimitations very costly. In creative industries even key players and talents are only loosely coupled to the organizations (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007). Temporality has been emphasized as one of the central aspects that organizes these industries, questioning the stability and persistence of formalized structures within these industries which has increasingly become replaced with the emergence of informal or so-called latent forms of organizations (Starkey et al., 2000) and the inter-relational aspects of organizing that creates stability and routines in the creative industries despite the lack of formal structures via the firm (Barley & Kunda, 2006; Jones, 1996; Wittel, 2001; Blair, 2003; Manning & Sydow, 2011; Sydow, 2009; DeFillippi, 2015). This has been of great interest for especially career scholars for analyzing the creative careers (Mathieu, 2012) or boundaryless careers (Arthur & Rousseau, 1996) that take place between the formal organizations, when people are hired into projects on temporary employment contracts instead of long-term positions in permanent organizations. Another aspect emphasized by the same group of scholars is the organization of skills on the market, wherein people are freelancers and the frequent hiring increases the need for organizing skills that allow efficient selection outside the formalized recruitment system, avoiding heavy and expensive recruitment processes, while ensuring to hire the right skills for the project (Eikhof, 2014). Management scholars have in this respect pinpointed that long-term survival of firms in creative industries depends of their ability to find, develop, maintain and utilize creative resources (Lampel et al., 2000 265). Skills in creative industries have for instance been said to be organized into A-list and B-list categories (Caves, 2000) between creatives differing in skills, experience level, originality or proficiency. This differentiation is an informal structure that creates some kind of security avoiding unpredictability of the quality of work when selecting from the pool of various potential creative workers in that respective creative industry. However, this informal ranking system doesn't guarantee high

quality work as artists can have good days and bad days as well as motivation and passion for the job can influence the quality. Likewise, since the creative skills are often hard to identify in isolated form as most creative products are sums of various creatives input. Furthermore, the demand for innovation makes it hard to recruit the people with the most prior experience as this might be outdated and they might be too embedded into those prior practices to ensure innovation, while recruiting to a nebulous vision makes it hard to even identify and specify a specific need for certain skills. The last point to mention of importance for managing skills is that products and skills are based on aesthetics and a great part of creative work implies performing aesthetic judgements that contribute to the final aesthetic experience of the end product (Banks, 2007). Managing skills implies understanding both how skills are produced and developed by individuals learning, evolving and refining social practices within and across different projects. Looking at how skills evolve across different projects over time is what defines boundaryless careers from a practice based perspective.

The third group of scholars; management scholars taking on the managerial perspective on this phenomenon about managing work, people and products seeks to understand the managerial challenges that appear based on the above described characteristics of the creative industries. Themes of interest to this group of scholars are for instance balancing change and persistence in temporary systems (see for example Stjerne & Svejenova, 2016; Manning & Sydow, 2011; Sydow, 2009; Baker & Faulkner, 1991; Goodman & Goodman, 1976)

Creative industries have been described as having a distinctive management style (Howkins, 2001). This is mainly because of their temporary and project based nature which implies a looser coupling between individuals and the organization, requiring more freedom and self-management for individuals (Banks, 2007) and a challenge of balancing temporariness with persistence. The second essential aspect

that makes these industries different to manage is the aesthetic nature of the work performed which makes evaluation and selection difficult. These two main characteristics reflect the challenges of managing opposing imperatives which are challenges found in all creative industries (Hirsch, 1972). These imperatives were highlighted in the special issue from 2000 of *Organization Science* edited by Joseph Lampel, Theresa Lant and Jamal Shamsie. The first imperative they mention is the balancing act between **artistic values and mass entertainment** which creates tensions for which of the logics should drive decision making. This entails balancing of art and commerce in creative industries, wherein art for art's sake holds that art is driven by inner visions and needs for expressions which are opposed to the capitalist imperatives of profit generation (Banks, 2007; Ryan, 1992; Caves, 2000). Secondly the **balancing between innovation and continuity**, as most creative industries are driven by a search for novelty and differentiation, balanced with accessibility and familiarity that allow for identification. Novelty as such must follow artistic and aesthetic conventions (Becker, 1982; Lampel et al., 2000; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000) and falling outside implies punishments and isolation or not being taken into consideration (Zuckerman, 2003). However, mixing genres is an option, wherein evaluations are performed through criteria or logics that are inherently belonging to the genres on which the mixed product draws (Mezias & Mezias, 2000). Another important way of dealing with these imperatives has been through hiring on resources with strong brands and reputations, building on existing genres and imitating other successful productions (Bielby & Bielby, 1994). In managing between those two imperatives it is essential to both ensure financial survival of the permanent organization, while providing creative autonomy for the creative workers (Banks, 2007). The challenge is the demands for managers providing predictable and standardized production while giving artistic leeway to the creative project workers (Miege, 1979).

The third balancing act falls between **market analysis and market construction** wherein managers need to both conform to a market demand, that often doesn't indicate if a creative product will sell or not as mostly costumers don't know what they want before they see it, as well as create or impact demand. Creative products don't just tap into existing tastes of customers, they also shape those tastes. Resultantly, practices of reading and changing the market are hard to distinguish, and often fall together (Anand & Peterson, 2000) and markets are also shaped by the institutions that select and promote some creative products over others (Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000). The forth imperative mentioned is **integration versus flexible specialization**, increasing control over the value chain by integrating or adding on more chains to the organization and avoiding risks accompanying creative processes balanced with specializations wherein the firm specializes and narrows down and concentrates their activities to what they are specialized in, leaving the other parts of the value chain to be taken care of by other firms. The final imperative mentioned was balancing **individual inspiration and the creative system**, as some believe that the individual creative often referred to by those as the creative entrepreneur (Eisenman & Bower, 2000) or the auteur is the pivotal source to successful productions in opposition to the belief that creative products are a hodgepodge of various artists' skills coming together (Becker, 1982). This creates managerial challenges of showing regard to both the individual and the group when managing employees' motivation. As part of this dilemma follows the challenge of managing the *motley crew* (Caves, 2000; Townley et al., 2009) of diversely skilled and specialized workers, each bringing their tastes, preferences and past experiences along to the project. As every function is important and contributes to the aggregated artistic expression, organizing and managing this *motley crew* is essential however challenging, balancing the individual's artistic freedom while communicating one single artistic vision.

In many aspects organizing and managing cannot be separated as they are interlinked as when managers practice they organize for instance work, projects, ideas, skills and practitioners on those sites in which they are interconnected. However, their power and influence to organize might differ. This dissertation contributes to both the managerial and the organizational scholars fields in creative industries by seeking to provide further insight into transcending organization but also explaining managerial boundary work and selection practices. The following chapter, as already stated above elaborates our understanding of transcending organization in creative industries.

Transcending organization in creative industries

This review of the transcending organization in creative industries was conducted in the following way. I have looked at publications over the past 7 years' research on creative industries containing 159 articles and 14 books. These are selected works and hence do not provide an exhaustive review. Using the keywords creative industries narrowing it down to 'theme' in the search engine *Libsearch* provided via the Copenhagen Business School library I obtained a total of 461 peer reviewed items on 14 August 2016. Since this is not an exhaustive review there is a risk of having overseen aspects of transcending organization. However, this is a comprehensive result for the creative industries field that provides essential insights. The folder was reexamined and screened for topics that provided insight into transcending organization in creative industries. The output of this process led to discerning seven different transcending organization in creative industries. These are: 1) Networks; 2) Enduring collaborations; 3) Careers; 4) Learning and skills development; 5) Norms, roles and hierarchies; 6) Categorization in genres into types, status and standards; and 7) Aesthetics. These seven are outlined in Table 1 below, stating key concepts, related notions central debates and questions, and the authors who have been involved.

Table 1: Theoretical overview of transcending organization in creative industries

Key concepts	Related Notions	Central debates	Literary references
Transcending organizations	Trans-organizations Network organizations Latent organizations	What organizes employment relationships and work in creative industries? They are organized beyond the firm in latent social structures	Eikhof, 2014; Blair, 2003; Starkey et al., 2000; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009.
Networks	Social capital Gatekeepers Networking Brokerage Core- periphery	How are employment relationships and work organized via social networks? E.g. how do people get jobs, resources and careers in creative industries? Networks provide an enduring transcending structure	Blair 2001, 2003; Jones, 1996; Lee, 2011; Foster et al., 2015; Cattani & Ferriani 2008.
Enduring collaborations	Semi-permanent work relations Repeat collaborations Temporary organizations Permanent organizations	How do enduring collaborations function as transcending organizations in creative industries? People tend to collaborate with the same team over a series of projects. This counts both for individuals collaborating and organizations wherein projects entrepreneurs form enduring collaborations with clients and service providers.	Blair, 2003; Barley & Kunda, 2006; Zuckerman 2005; Manning and Sydow, 2011; Manning, 2008; DeFillippi, 2015; Staber 2004; Sydow, 2009; Sorenson & Waguespack, 2006; Johnsen, 2011; Wittel, 2001; Schwab & Miner, 2008.
Careers	Career coupling Career creativity Collective careers Artistic careers Stretch-work Career-self management	What projects do people work on over time? How do people select projects and how are people selected for projects? Careers are another transcending organizer of skills, people and work in creative industries, i.e. people enter into projects and collaborations for various reasons and peoples' success rubs off on collaboration partners' careers.	Jones, 1996; Blair, 2001; Starkey et al., 2000; Eikhof, 2010; Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009; Mathieu & Stjerne, 2012,2014; Svejenova, 2010; Mathieu, 2012; Faulkner & Anderson, 1987; Ashton, 2015; O'Mahony & Bechky, 2006; Menger, 1999; Peiperl, Arthur & Anand, 2002.
Learning and skills development	Skill-development in project networks Communities of practice Tacit knowledge On-the-job learning	What ensures learning and knowledge in and across temporary systems? How is it possible to innovate? How do practitioners learn tacit knowledge? And what does this imply for careers?	Staber, 2004; Grabher 2002, 2004a, 2004b; Sydow, J., Lindkvist, L., & DeFillippi, R. (2004); Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2011; Frenette, 2013; Tempest, 2009.

Norms, roles and hierarchies	Role as resource Role expectations Swift trust	What organizes work in creative industries? How do practitioners know what to practice? Roles as social industry norm provide standards for behavior across projects and employment- it orders employment relations	Bechky, 2006; Kramer, 2009; Tempest, 2009; Baker & Faulkner 1991; Meyerson, Weick & Kramer, 1996.
Categorization in genres, types, status and standards	Art worlds Tournament rituals Performance measurement of creativity Categorization Typecasting Reputation Genres Crossing, spanning and bridging boundaries	Why do some project ideas and people get selected over other in creative industries? How is the final product evaluated on the market? Boundaries such as categories, genres, ritual, practices and standards set demarcation lines that latently organize creative industries. Judgement shapes categorizations, standards, status, reputations and practices that are constantly considered, challenged and sometimes changed.	Becker, 1982; Anand & Jones, 2002; Anand & Croidieu, 2015; Hadida, 2015; Peretti & Negro, 2000; Lena & Pachucki, 2013; Lena & Peterson, 2008; Lena, 2012; Byrkjeflot, Strandgaard Pedersen & Svejenova, 2013; Svejenova, 2005; Svejenova et al., 2007; Hsu, 2006; Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2005; Zuckerman, Kim, Ukanawa, & von Rittman, 2003.
Aesthetics	Art worlds Aesthetic judgement Taste Aesthetic boundaries	How does aesthetics set boundaries for what can be practiced? How are products, people and industries defined and divided aesthetically? Aesthetics organize a transcending order embedded in the practices. People perform work on the aesthetic boundaries of an art world and by that reenact and change the art world.	Becker, 1982; Hennion, 2004; Halida, 2015; Blair 2001; Lee, 2011; Foster et al., 2015; Foster & Ocejo 2015; Wagner, 2012; Cattani & Ferriani 2008; Bielby, Moloney & Ngo, 2005; Lena & Pachucki, 2013; Pachucki, Pendergrass, Lamont, 2007.

For the sake of clarity and overview in the Table above outlining transcending organization in creative industries, it was divided into sections according to the key concept. The following section to some extent follows the same order but discusses beyond and across key concepts in order to provide a more nuanced understanding.

I start with social networks that are strongly aligned with transorganizations in the ‘sister’ concept “latent organizations” (Starkey et al, 2000). Networks are per se

broader than the firm itself, not least in creative industries where work is organized in projects based in different film production firms. Network analysis explains who is connected to whom and how. Mostly this has been used to explain the role of gatekeepers, limiting access to markets (Foster & Ocejo, 2015), organizations and jobs (Jones, 1996), and knowledge (Stoyanova & Grugulis, 2011). Networks explain how people are socially organized which results in answers to who can recommend whom, because they know each other. In the film industry social capital (Bourdieu, 1991) or social networks is a common explanation of who has successful careers. These analyses show that it all comes down to being well-connected. In order to gain access to the A-list productions people must be invited in by friends or family (Blair, 2001; Jones 1996), or have the right agents (Bielby & Bielby, 1994). In many creative industries jobs are not advertised and as a result word of mouth and who you know is very important. People recommend each other, which is why getting jobs depends on the social network (Lee, 2011). Connectedness does not only concur to individuals performing careers but also projects and production companies need to reach out to a geographically wider spread of mobile international networks in order to engage essential players and be successful (Foster et al., 2015). These social networks can be understood as a specific kind of transcending organization because they are informal organizations that most often transcend the scope of the firm- yet the concept is mostly used to describe the informal order that transcend the formal organizations (Blair 2001, 2003; Jones, 1996; Lee, 2011; Foster et al., 2015; Cattani & Ferriani, 2008). I shall as well argue that social networks are connected to the practices. Based on the practices people are embedded in- that connect people who signal and judge each other based on similar codes- and as a result “like” and can approve and recommend each other’s work. Social networks is hence a prerequisite for being success in performing creative work because people and firms depend on recommendations, reputations and resources that travels

through these social networks (Lee, 2011; Foster et al., 2015; Jones, 1996; Blair, 2003). Making creative results is a matter of people being able to occupying an intermediate position between the core and the periphery of their social system (Cattani & Ferriani, 2008). I will maintain a skeptical distance to this conceptual explanation in this dissertation as I believe it explains parts of who gets recommended by whom, providing simple cause-effect explanations of who gets nominated for jobs, but it does not open up the back box of what happens inside the networks and what constitutes these networks.

Another important transcending organization is the enduring collaborations over time that exceeds the individual project and firm. People tend to collaborate with others with whom they have collaborated before, collaborating in so called semi-permanent work groups (Blair, 2003). Sticking with the same people is triggered by the fact that creating a shared language for collaboration and building up a common reference base takes much time and energy, which is difficult in a project with a tight deadline. A common language and development of expression and taste is important for collaborating well together on a project. People and projects are, as I will elaborate on in the first paper in this dissertation, dependent on having a common fascination and taste in order to collaborate as projects are driven forward via voluntary effort (with an expected return if the project gets funding) in their initiating phases, having a huge risk of failing to obtain funding and never getting paid for their effort. Collaborating with the same partners over time provides a common knowledge base on which they can build, challenge and innovate in current practices through projects. It is perceived risky to take in new untested people, with whom the person has never collaborated as creative project work is intensive and requires close collaborations for many hours. The risk of getting a “nagger” or someone having bad taste would endanger the entire production.

Sometimes inter-personal collaborations cannot continue. This can be a result of people developing in different directions, wanting to try out new paths of practice, or needing new input (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2012). People who have not yet found the perfect collaboration partner seek them, and break-ups can be devastating as there is a underlying norm in the film industry that you will use the same people next time if they performed well (Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009; Stjerne & Svejnova, 2016). As a result, semi-permanent work relations are another transcending organization in film that provides order to employment relations.

This very same debate links to careers and results in conceptualizing careers as “shared careers” or “collective careers” (Svejnova et al, 2010) also introducing the concept “career shadowing” which indicates that careers often are results of collective work in teams. Careers and work can, from a practice based approach, be understood processually and hence work and careers are not easy to separate when talking about transcending orders. What I will emphasize in this matter are the career self-management often talked about as strategies, and choices people make. These are important transcending orders that influence work and employment relationships. People are not always skilled enough for the jobs they get offered and take on. Stretch work is a way to ensure learning opportunities by lowering prices, framing competencies, bluffing, and using referrals as a substitute for experience (O’Mahony & Bechky, 2006). These strategies are especially necessary in these industries where there is an oversupply of labor and hence fierce competition (Menger, 1999). Careers in creative industries develop along certain occupational and hierarchical patterns (Jones, 1996; Ashton, 2015). Furthermore, gender often plays a role as males are allocated into technical junior positions whereas females typically start in administrative producer assistant positions (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2012). In the film and TV industries most workers

start their careers as a runner, although this is being challenged by the higher education students that enter these industries (Ashton, 2015).

Learning and skills is strongly related to careers as already hinted at in the paragraph above and provides another transcending organization in creative industries. Skills are learned through work as tacit knowledge is the most current form in these industries and hence the practices that people learn, develop and refine over time at work as ‘on-the-job-learning’ in projects. Learning moves beyond the single project and the individual firm, and is embedded in the semi-permanent work groups wherein work is performed, and wherein practices are learned, refined and changed over time. Such enduring social collaborations beyond the single project provide a basis for enduring learning and innovation and are essential for the success of temporary organizations that draw on the learning from past project networks (Staber, 2004). Neophytes are especially dependent on getting into the right positions wherein practices and skills can be learned, although as shown through research from the UK TV industry, this is not always the case (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2009) resulting in people lacking access to essential learning opportunities and hence being excluded from becoming a practitioner. This triggers people to develop career strategies to enable learning opportunities through “stretch work” of skills (O’Mahony & Bechky, 2006). Semi-permanent work relations have also been found between companies and particular providers and partners (Grabher, 2002, 2004a, 2004b).

There is by now no doubt that these latent forms of organizing of work are stabilized through inter-personal relationships (Barley & Kunda, 2006; Jones, 1996), and are organized in transcending organization (Eikhof, 2014) making the formal contract of lesser importance as an incentive and managerial mechanism because evaluations in the social, and the role of gossiping (Eikhof & Haunschild,

2006) and reputation (Svejenova, 2005) are stronger and more powerful organizers of employment relationships. They are stronger because people are freelancers and employment is temporary, implying a lack of mutual long-term commitment and supposedly stronger self-interests, and a lack of control over the employee performance in general (Goodman & Goodman, 1976). If the employee is underperforming, it is difficult to replace the person immediately while keeping the deadlines and budgets of the project. There is so to say a mutual vulnerability that creates “swift trust” providing an informal organization that avoids the employment relationship resorting to mere self-interest wherein employers mistreat employees and employees underperform or even quit half way though the project. Swift trust is an awareness of the mutual vulnerability of the employer and employee in the relationship that despite the temporary nature of these relationships makes both parties behave decently. Both parties depend on the others good evaluation. For the individual employee this means ensuring a good reputation in order to get the next job and for the company allowing it to attract talent in the future. It hence makes transcending order across firms and projects that ensure a good and mutually fair and ethical work relationship between employers and employees (Jones, 1996; Blair, 2003; Meyerson et al., 1996). An example would be a film company that would back out of agreements made between the firm and the individual freelancer, or steal project ideas, discard people in manners that does not live up to the “break up practice” in the Danish film industry, and thus such a company would find it difficult to attract talent over time. Likewise, freelancers who would act lazy and underperform, exceed agreed budgets or leave the project for more interesting opportunities elsewhere would over time get a bad reputation and job offers would dry out. Likewise, a part of being evaluated positively which reflects on reputation and careers is living up to functional role expectations and practicing the adherent social behaviors (Bechky, 2006).

The last transcending organization lies in the categorization performed through evaluations of people, products and markets. Evaluations are based on categories that simplify and enable interpretation of the overwhelming amounts of information that are part of perception of everyday life (Simmel, 1910). This refers to the literature about status, reputation, rituals and standards in creative industries. These categories are naturally orders that transcend the firms as they are socially created transcending orders. Social classifications are created through constant valuation and identification processes creating distinctions or boundaries of created categories such as insider and outsiders, genres being defined in opposition to others, making both vertical and horizontal differentiation. The first makes vertical distinctions of hierarchy and status and the latter allowing for horizontal categorizations into genres and types. In creative industries, valuation is distinctive because as mentioned in the prior chapter about the distinctive feature of creative industries, products are by nature aesthetic which makes them difficult to value. Despite evaluation being difficult this is no less than the glue that sticks art-worlds together (Becker, 1982) as it distinguishes “good art” from “bad art” and insiders from outsider in these worlds. People and projects are constantly evaluated or judged and in these processes they are categorized and cast into existing genres (Hsu 2006; Lena & Pachucki, 2013; Anand & Croidieu, 2015) and those sticking to a specific genre have been found to enjoy greater success than individuals that are not typecast (Zuckerman et al., 2003). Innovations in this set are interesting for explaining how genres evolve. Lena & Peterson (2008) showed how genres evolved in four stages wherein the first avant-garde stage only implied few individuals, who in small scope intended to break with existing practices and boundaries whereby the genre spread and became a tradition, setting the standards of the industry in the last stage. Innovation happens when people seek to cross over, span or bridge things belonging to different domains, performing boundary work on the boundaries (Stjerne & Svejenova, 2016).

Aesthetics is the final yet essential transcending organization in creative industries. As it is so central to this dissertation, and creative industries, aesthetics is what the rest of this literature review centers on, as outlined in the following subsections.

Aesthetic practices as transcending organization in creative industries

Howard Becker (1982) was one of the early scholars whose main focus of research was art worlds wherein he from an ethnographic point of view opened up the understanding of how work was performed and practiced in these worlds. He looked at art as a joint activity produced by an assemblage of a, often large, number of talented people. Already in this work some of the characteristics were highlighted of what later on became research on cultural and creative industries as a main research focus e.g. the importance of art for art sake, following conventions from within the art world, who will define “what is and what isn’t art” (Becker 1982: 36), wherein essential conventions must be followed in the work of art, resulting in innovative ideas not always being accepted as art as it is aesthetically judged and evaluated by essential key players both inside the world-based on taste, which in this dissertation is a learned knowledge (Gherardi, 2009). Or as Howard Becker puts it:

“...Aesthetic judgement... is a collective activity (wherein)... the interaction of all the involved parties produces a shared sense of the worth of what they collectively produce. Their mutual appreciation of the conventions they share and the support that they mutually afford one another, convince them that hat they are doing is worth doing... convinc(ing) them that what they produce is valid works of art”

(Becker, 1982: 39)

Tastes or aesthetic judgment is an essential part of the industry, which has later on within the creative industries literature been described as the nature of the product being aesthetic and hence hard to objectively judge or evaluate according to predefined parameters (Caves, 2000). Furthermore, these collective conventions, as Becker calls them, can be understood from a practice based perspective as the social practices of learning how to judge, express, refine and sometimes even change taste (Gherardi, 2009). Innovation and change happens as a result of people going against and challenging conventions (Svejenova & Jones, 2012; Jones, Svejenova & Strandgaard, 2011; Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007; Becker, 1982). Change in conventions are unavoidable as “no two performances are alike” (Becker 1982: 302) and even grand innovations can go unremarked because we tend to look for similarities whereas differences go unremarked or are noticed as mistakes or drifts that must be corrected. Some drift becomes incorporated into practices creating new conventions for practice and challenge the usual. Only changes or “attacks that the art world can accept and incorporate” become innovations and create change (Becker, 1982: 305). Sometimes the audience welcomes innovations that are too great for the existing art world to pick up on, resulting in new art world emerging in opposition to the old existing art world, often starting a war of practices. An example of this from was the initiation of the *Dogme* movement in the Danish film industry that changed the entire practice and the embedded aesthetics (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2014). An attack on aesthetic beliefs is embodied in particular conventions and challenging those is hence an attack on the existing system (Becker 1982). This happens fairly often in creative industries because one of the distinctive characteristics, as mentioned above is the convention that innovation, not least through rebelling against standards and existing conventions, is good and desirable (Lampel et al., 2000; Wijnberg & Gemser, 2000). Aesthetics is a strong convention or informal transcending organization that structures creative industries and many aspects of

employment relationships and work. It influences the work practices and the communities that people can become part of. Hence work and employment relationships are reorganized when innovations change or create new art worlds. This also indicates something of great importance for understanding transcending organization namely that people collaborate in the art world whose practices a person has learned through the processes of becoming a practitioner. Semi-permanent work relations are in this respect based on the transcending organization of aesthetics, amongst other things. People change those practices while practicing them, but also uphold certain aesthetic conventions and practices that are strongly incorporated into this world. Structures in the industry are built on communication through aesthetic symbols extending the argument of structures being made from cognitive systems (Lash & Urry, 1994). Aesthetic reflexivity organizes creative industries as the use- and exchange value has always been sign value, which stands in opposition to the highly developed information and communication structures in society (Lash & Urry, 1994: 112-144) based on logic and sensible knowledge (Shusterman, 2006). Resultantly aesthetic judgment is one of the most essential aspects of performing art and being an artist (Becker, 1982). This has often been neglected in the studies of creative industries or only treated in subsequently as parts of management dilemmas of for instance balancing art and commerce or managing the motley crew which is vertically differentiated team members assembled into a project, coming from various different prior productions and having different tastes (Caves, 2000) which also implies having different practices.

When looking at work in creative industries and artistic workers it quickly becomes clear that all practices are to some extent based on a underlying aesthetic conventions that the project is embedded in. Managing creative workers requires meeting their need for a substantial amount of artistic freedom in order to perform

their work with a sense of authenticity (Svejenova, 2005), a tendency being intensified by the European auteur tradition (Becker, 1982; Malou-Strandvad, 2012). The auteur understanding sees the auteur as the creator of the film although it has been made by a group of people. The auteur expresses his or her inner visions and aesthetics through the media of the film (Malou-Stranvaad, 2012). It becomes the personality and trademark of the film. Selecting the right auteur- and team, is hence essential for the film because the aesthetic skills and selection practices are highly embedded in this way of understanding aesthetics in the film industry. The power of the auteur is important as it gives much power of defining what is- and what isn't good art within a project. Many people both in the team, the production company, the audience, and investors have opinions about this. Although it can be argued that everybody has a right to have an opinion about what is good and bad art, some people's opinions are more influential than others in defining the aesthetic boundaries of the social practice. Becker explains this with the following: "*some opinions are worth more than others, because their holders have more experience of the works or genres in question*" (Becker, 1982: 47). Often these taste specialists are convention-setters for defining what is and what isn't considered art within that specific community of practitioners within whom the specialist holds a high status. Everybody has an aesthetic opinion and due to aesthetic nature of art, performances and skills are hard to [objectively] evaluate (Caves 2000). However, as Becker notes above, some opinions weigh more than others. When stakeholders do not have knowledge in an art world, it becomes a source for tensions especially when power differences occur and delimit the artistic freedom (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011).

Aesthetic judgement and the adherent concept of taste are essential organizations in creative industries that go across the formalized structures and firms of the industry, creating stability as they are entangled in and part of the work practiced

of producing creative products. When trying to satisfy the customer it's a balancing act between consistence and innovation, and finding the right balance can be very difficult.

Aesthetic boundaries

Pierre Bourdieu made an essential contribution to the study of aesthetic boundaries in his approach to classification struggles and fields of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993). Aesthetic boundaries of tastes were created as a result of habitus developed from socialization in a field, wherein social, cultural and economic capital summed up in the total of symbolic capital of a societal group, which created distinctions of tastes and power between people in society, shaping preferences according to habitus developed within that specific field (Bourdieu 1991). In the book *Distinction: a social critique of the judgement of taste* (1984). Pierre Bourdieu seeks to explain social inequality and societal class segregated differences in tastes in society. Taste is cultural capital that people learn through socialization into the environment that they are brought up in. People with high volume of cultural capital, such as education, which promotes social mobility beyond economic means, defines what good taste is. Because of habitus people are unable to just change their tastes that are inert and embedded within people. This is how important aesthetic differences appear and get used to reenact existing societal structures in most subtle ways that seems individual but in fact are social and divides society into fields. This work is an essential contribution to understanding aesthetic boundaries in society more generally. What is useful from this theory is the understanding that aesthetics create boundaries that become embedded in individuals making them experience the world in a certain manner with taste preferences. However, the "right taste" is easily defined by those who have power in a society, in an industry, firm or project and because of their embedded nature they are inert and it is difficult for others to reposition

themselves to a more favorable social field that has more symbolic capital. Bourdieu's analysis provides structural explanations for a societal phenomenon but does not explain how fields are produced, changed or reproduced. It lacks essential detailed illumination of what people do in detail and hence is unable to provide detailed explanations that connects the activities of people and the social structures.

Howard Becker and the more recent studies on aesthetic boundaries provide more dynamic views on these matters. Becker explains how art worlds are constantly defined and refined through judgements from within. Becker provides important insights into judgements on a daily basis and links it to the structure of how the art world becomes and is defined. Such distinctions are created in the practices of daily work, resulting in boundaries of practices being defined as belonging insiders and the strangers as outsiders (Becker, 1982). Boundaries of art worlds are comprised of networks of artists, critics and audiences, including some artists and art works together while excluding others (Jones, 2010). These processes of demarcating boundaries provide categorizations of "white" and "black" music genres (Roy, 2004; Grazian, 2003). This was also explained by Becker (1982) as a result of people clustering in spaces and being exposed to specific types of music while never encountering others that, as a result, remain strangers. Collins (2004) shows how creativity unfolded in music around current aesthetic boundaries through bridging to canonic music composers. Cultural learning intercepted from master to apprentice, guided the contemporary successful composers in performing and creating. By puzzling together contemporary works and canonic interceptions works of high cultural order with richly layered cultural meanings were produced.

Balancing aesthetic boundaries evolves around the reciprocal demands of novelty and familiarity, managing those in a balancing act: needing to be sufficiently different to be recognized as an innovative aesthetic contribution on the border of

the boundary, yet not so different that categories become impossible to identify (Alvarez et al., 2005; Caves, 2000; Lampel et al., 2000; Lena & Peterson, 2008). Aesthetic boundaries are constantly drawn in creative industries which in many ways organize these fields. Through boundary work people play with and change these aesthetic boundaries within their field. This can be done by either seeking to fit into genres as shown in studies of the film industry (Zuckerman 2003, 2005) or deviating from existing genres through introducing new aesthetic mediators such as staging and instruments belonging to other art worlds (Hennion, 1997). Or as shown in the study of rap artists' use of fragments from prior songs to construct shared memory that guide their audience to classifying their work into subgenres (Lena, 2004, 2009, 2012).

In haute cuisine studies were made that show how consumers' understandings of food changed over time creating *de novo* categories such as haute cuisine (Ferguson, 1998, 2004) and new Nordic cuisine (Byrkjeflot et al., 2013). In the case of French gastronomy, chefs redrew boundaries between classical and nouvelle cuisine, two aesthetic categories that were eroded by chefs borrowing and emulating elements from rivals (Rao et al., 2005). Similar category spanning was found in architecture in the creation of a *de novo* category resulting in symbolic and material transformations. In this process, rivals of defining the new category modern architecture created tensions as two distinct groups of practitioners attempted to inscribe different aesthetic codes and conventions to the practice and the last aesthetic boundaries were merged into a common expanded '*de novo*' category (Jones et al., 2012).

The above show how aesthetics is a transcending order embedded in practices of an industry, but that aesthetics are also dynamic. They are both worked with, on and against. Aesthetics provide boundaries as they are inherently embedded in the practices. They are transient structures that allow practitioners to practice and judge the work of their own and others. Aesthetics have boundaries although they

are not predefined entities but can be seen in their effects as they set conventions, expression and judgement of practitioners. When aesthetics are challenged it creates tensions and even fights between groups who seek to define and dominate the practice. When practices are aesthetically categorized as opposites fighting for the same resources (Shove et al. 2012) merging categories is more difficult as they are likely to be judged negatively falling outside category (Zuckerman, 2003). Openings for merging happen when new practitioners with less string attached to both worlds are allowed to take on a boundary role (Stjerne & Svejenova, 2016).

Aesthetics organizing skills in creative industries

Aesthetic skills are essential to manage although they are, as stated by Florida, the skills that the creative workers possess, is a capacity, which is “*an intangible because it is literally in their heads*” (Florida, 2002: 68). In order for the project initiators and investors to evaluate the imagined future aesthetic product it is essential to understand the aesthetic vision and skills of those people who will carry out and further develop the project. It is tacit knowledge carrying important aesthetic and embodied judgements that will lead the project in a certain direction, as creative entrepreneurs need to be given substantial freedom and ownership over the project in order for them to drive it forward (Peltoniemi, 2014; Hirsch, 1972). Since these skills are aesthetic they are felt and experienced emotionally, and as a result they are difficult to diverge from as they guide the creatives’ decisions from within. Going against these experienced judgements has strong emotional consequences and a feeling of lack of authenticity, making the creative worker less capable of or less inclined to performing his/her work without trusting in aesthetic judgement (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2014). An example of this is outlined in the second paper of this dissertation. It shows how a director developed a ‘too good taste’ for what she was able to practice at the time and hence felt incapable of

practicing (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2014). Skills are a result part of the latent aesthetic structures inherent in the creative industries. Starting with managing the selection of skills and talent it requires that people are able to knowledgeably judge the people they select. Being a practitioner of a social practice provides learning and knowledge of the practices and hence also the ability to judge good from bad taste. Furthermore the front runners who were the initiators of changing or refining a specific practice become the new talent of the newly emerged practices while prior talent becomes “old hat”. In project initiation and development phases similar difficulties are present, i.e. lacking objective and discursively defined measurements makes it challenging to navigate and develop a project in the desired direction which aligns with the original vision, but also fits with the project owners’ own interpretation. As taste is learned and embodied into the practices performed and the experiences felt and sensed by individuals, judgement is inherently aligned with a persons’ taste. Tastes cannot be faked as they are intrinsically felt and sensed experiences enabling aesthetic judgements. They provide creative workers with answers for questions and leads to a coherent aesthetic expression in the product. A great part of creative work involves making aesthetic decisions (Caves, 2000; Becker, 1982) and lack of appropriate taste adherent to the art worlds’ taste result in tensions that needs to be resolved.

Aesthetics organizing careers in creative industries

As a result of aesthetics being learned, developed and refined, strongly felt and sensed, they become embodied. People tend to collaborate in semi-permanent work groups (Blair, 2003), in which members of the group belong to the same art world, having the same aesthetic boundaries. Within these groups of collaborations, partners experiment with different aesthetic expressions over time (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2012) in trusted environments wherein a common language has already been built as a result of long term collaborations and having created a

common aesthetic reference base. A persons' development often depends on collaborations with other team players as learning happens when practicing which is often in collaboration with other practitioners (Bresnen, Edelman, Newell, Scarbrough & Swan, 2003).

Artists' careers have been said to be driven by a deep intrinsic desire for aesthetic expression (McKinlay & Smith, 2009). This belongs to the art for art's sake logic that thrives in many artistic environments, wherein commercial aspects are deemed poisonous and hindering for creativity (Townley & Beech, 2010).

Aesthetic expression is based on tastes and is learned in the process of becoming a practitioner (Gherardi, 2009). Careers are hence carried out within the boundaries of the learned practice, however always in the making when practices change as they are constantly refined or abandoned for new ones, in the negotiation of a practice (Gherardi, 2009) implying also defining boundaries of the practice in the defining of what belongs to and what is outside this practice. Some people are in this sense more on the forefront or core to the practice than others at certain points of time. Here we find the practitioners who "invented", initiated or made the latest innovations within the practice or the practitioners who are on the forefront of pushing forward and defining the boundaries of it. This may be many practitioners in collaboration, but can also be very few individuals such as in the *Dogme* movement in film being started as a low risk experiment on a TV production by Lars Von Trier who in collaboration with his team felt a need to experiment with setting strict dogmas for the production to see what came out. In these years from 1994 to 2004 a small group of practitioners from this movement was defining the new practice that evolved through collaborative learning across the projects. Ideas were driven by a desire to take this learning further and resulted in the famous 10 *Dogme* rules defined and practiced by four directors who swore their oath to be true to and follow these. This resulted in a new aesthetic expressive style that has

since moved into the Nordic noir movement seen in the more recent TV series. In such cases of new practices, it becomes clear that careers are always a matter of learning, practicing, refining and sometimes abandoning tastes in collaborations with others who are part of the same practice. This also creates boundaries for career mobility as artists are most likely unable to travel across practices or so-called art worlds as the aesthetics guide them in choosing projects, what they will find interesting but also what they are able to practice.

Linking Aesthetics to temporary organizations in creative industries

The extensive amount of temporary contracting and organizations in creative industries affects the relationships and the organizing of work. Most creative workers are employed on temporary contracts within projects of short duration. Some last for only a few days (Blair, 2001) and the organizations in creative industries are mostly organized as project-based organizations, in order to ensure flexibility and keep overhead as low as possible. In project based organizations products and services are supplied primarily through project.

(DeFillippi & Arthur, 1998; Hobday, 2000), and only a small core of permanent employees is kept to manage daily operations between projects.

Temporality is the predominant organizing parameter in creative industries which results in less control and power to the firms to create persistence. The temporary employees need to be given artistic freedom to develop the projects, however the final aesthetic expression and identity of the product ends up as part of the identity of the project-based firm and can also be a means to achieve organizational change and innovation (Sydow et al., 2004). Temporary organizing allows for the permanent firm to challenge, contest and cross boundaries of the existing art worlds, without putting the permanent firm at risk (Obstfeld, 2012). However other challenges in managing temporary employees appears as they are harder to control and direct towards the organizational goals of the firm and ensure stable

incomes is also challenging because each project is unpredictable, yet the firm depends on the projects to deliver returns on investment and be aligned with the strategy of the permanent organization (Engwall, 2003). In some cases, project based enterprises are “hollow” (Whitley, 2006), i.e. they are primarily legal vehicles or means for administrative convenience in realizing projects, without much further interaction (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1998). In other cases, however, they support their projects with abilities and networks in accessing resources as well as with knowledge and experience in defining work processes (Modig, 2007). This interlinkage between temporary organizations provides stability and endurance in form of transcending organization. The reason for this is that firms over time within these collaborations informal structures emerge between the firms. The memory of the past projects is used to shape and direct judgements of present projects while projections of future successes and income shape their becoming and support attachments and detachments to the permanent organization and the fields in which they are embedded (Grabher, 2002b, 2004a, 2004b; Stjerne & Svejenova, 2016).

The question is then how companies navigate and manage the span between temporariness and persistence to ensure survival? This links to the balancing between artistic and commercial projects as commercial projects are often perceived as non-artistic within creative industries, however commerce is unavoidable for the financial viability and survival of the permanent organization. In opposition, high art projects are more risky financially as they build on innovative and untested ideas; however they attract artistic talent and ensure the skills and reputation needed for the firm to creatively survive and attract funding in the Danish context. Hence aesthetics and temporary-permanent organizing are two sides of the same coin of managing in creative industries. In the balancing between temporary and permanency, it is essential for the permanent firms to

balance the influence of temporary staff, that serves their own interests, and the permanency for what is good for the permanent firm in order to survive. With increasing unstable market conditions permanent organizations tend to increase management and a strategic control over projects by connecting the producer's work to administration and company needs for revenue, staffing, budgets and equipment (Ryan, 1992:181). Before the markets started pressuring creative industries ideas mainly came from the auteur, driven by an intrinsic desire for expression or creative idea (Becker 1982) whereas this was changed. For painters this happened way back in the fifteenth century where contracts increasingly specified the character of their painting that they were hired to do. In the film industry this happened with the introduction of TV series, that are known to be bread and butter productions. Before that, to initiating projects based on market interests. Balancing temporariness and permanency is one of the biggest strategic challenges of project based organization. Even through auteur driven productions estimated to have a slim market segment have shown to become best sellers and predicting rationally how aesthetic products will be evaluated and the ticket sales is impossible (Caves, 2000; Becker, 1982). In this contradictory game of survival through balancing persistence and change in and between permanent and temporary systems, new ways of organizing emerge e.g. in film creating sequels with more temporal past and future shadows to prior and future films or making TV series that have a longer time span (Ryan, 1992).

Despite the large body of literature on the transcending organization in creative industries, important insights into the social practices are by and large neglected. Only few theorists have emphasized the role of aesthetics as transcending organization in creative industries, despite many scholars having pointed out that exactly those two aspects are some of the distinctive characteristics of creative industries (Caves, 2000).

The above theories provide essential insights into the research on aesthetic boundaries; however most of them still apply dichotomous understandings sticking with dualisms in describing boundaries or lacking in depth ethnographic studies. In need for understanding transcending organization that provide routines and stable work relations of a creative industry transcending firms, individuals and projects, the notion of field is better replaced with the notion of social sites (Schatzki et al, 2001). Social sites are not necessarily spatial but instead they can be understood as: “*arenas or broader sets of phenomena as part of which something — a building, an institution, an event — exists or occurs.*” (Schatzki, 2005: 467f.). This understanding can be understood as zooming in and out on a phenomenon. Different activities interlink with other activities that in total aggregate to a practice and the practice intersect and relate to other practices that makes them part of a larger phenomenon (Schatzki, 2005).

Looking at complex phenomena requires huge complex analysis, as they in opposition to small phenomena are nexuses of manifold practices that are interlinked (Schatzki, 2016).

Chapter 4: Research sites, designs and methodology

The Danish film industry as initial research site

The film industry was one of the first industries to organize on a project basis using flexible specialization. This was pioneered in the early 70s in the US (Christopherson & Storper 1989). The Danish film industry went through this transformation later than in the US but can now be characterized as a stereotypical case of a latent organization. The uniqueness can especially be seen in the peripheral role of the companies in the production process, which differs from traditional organizational theory. This implies that talent is hired in on projects when needed, and the majority of workers are not employed on a permanent basis (Christopherson & Storper, 1989; Jones, 1996; Jones and DeFillipi, 1996; Langham, 1996). Still today only little formal structure exists in the Danish film industry and the unions. The Danish film industry is well organized with employers being organized in the producers' union, the directors in the directors' union, and actors in the actors' union and crew technicians in the Film & Television Workers Union (FAF) (Mathieu, 2009) however these unions play a limited role in formally organizing employment relationships in comparison with the US industry (Blair, Culkin & Randle, 2003). In addition, the Danish film industry operates with small budgets which make roles less strictly predefined by industry norms and union agreements. The lack of formal organization makes transcending organizations play an even greater role in this case. Recruitment in the American film industry is mediated by agents who match film workers with jobs (Bielby & Bielby, 1994) This is not the case in the Danish film industry as it is fairly small world wherein people can easily identify each other by face to face relations, and if not directly then through 3rd parties. As such this case provides an

interesting case for understanding the phenomenon of organizing aesthetics transorganizationally.

Denmark has a small and aesthetically differentiated feature film industry, which is supported by state subsidies through the Danish Film Institute (DFI). Established in 1972, the DFI has a dual system of art and market funds. The former is directed to artistic movies based on their novelty and aesthetic merits, while the latter supports films with expected box office success. Funding for the artistic movies is provided through four consultants, each employed on a four year contract. They are industry insiders, often film editors and directors, who after their service at DFI usually return to their prior occupations. Their evaluations and recommendations concern various aspects of the movie, such as the idea, manuscript, team constellation, and production company. They seek to ensure that the film can be carried out on time, within budget, and with quality, and that it has sufficient novelty to add cultural value and enrich the filmic language. The commercial funding is based on a standard application process with four submission deadlines per year. A board with industry representatives grants funding to films with the highest commercial potential.

Despite its small size, the Danish film industry is known for a great number of unconventional, experimental movies that have advanced filmic methods and genres, and have been appreciated internationally. In the 1970s, Danish films included politically provocative movies and anti-moralizing realist youth films. Further, a satire cartoon genre was initiated that broke away from the conventional Disney animation style. In the 1980s Danish films won international awards for their realism and a new genre in children movies appeared within realism. In 1989 a new film law was implemented which introduced a 50/50 grant deal supporting the budget of films with a commercial appeal with up to 50% from DFI. That led to the making of popular movies low on innovation and a significant number of

sequels that built on prior methods, movies, and ideas. It also split the Danish film industry in two domains - an art-house domain and a commercial domain - which evolved separate work practices, methods, values, and taste, and networks of film professionals.

In the commercial domain, driven by market success and having a big audience, a few of the biggest firms are Grasten Film, ASA Film and to some extent also the more recently founded Fridthjof Film. These film production companies were known to primarily make financially viable films based on already known brands and books framed into the comedy and family film genre in order to ensure a broad audience.

In the artistic domain of the Danish film industry, the 1990s witnessed the birth of the avant-garde film movement *Dogme 95*, which brought about an essential innovation in filmic methods and language and put forward an alternative set of film making principles and conventions that sought to preserve the purity of filmmaking and to free it from special effects and other technical modifications. The initial experimentation related to the new methods took place in a low budget TV series called 'Riget' (The Kingdom) directed by Lars Von Trier. The most acclaimed *Dogme95* certified film was Thomas Vinterberg's *Festen*, The Celebration, produced by Nimbus Film. Together with Zentropa, these were the two most active production companies involved in *Dogme* movies.

At this time TV series and sequels were perceived as low status productions and often used as entry point to the film industry by new directors and other inexperienced film workers. Feature film production was a good business and DVD sales made up to 50% of a film's total income (DFI.dk). Art-house films thrived as they had the potential for being produced within a relatively small budget, producing box-office revenues at the cinema and DVD sales afterwards, while also enjoying international recognition and sales in some cases because of

the growing international attention to Danish films. With the appearance and growing popularity of new online distribution channels and streaming services, and the inability of the industry to come up with new business models, in the 2000s the film market shrank significantly and film investments became a risky business. The first serious crisis in the Danish film industry was felt in 2009 when box office halved compared to the previous year and the DVD market lost a great part of its value (Deloitte Report, 2013:26). In 2008 two of the biggest art-house production companies – Zentropa and Nimbus – were looking for ways to deal with the changing industry context. Zentropa was sold to a bigger player, Nordic Film, and Nimbus Film had to lay off a third of its employees, with the company owners using their private properties as a backing to sizable bank loans to secure the company’s survival (Rottbøll, 2008). Overall, art-house production companies began looking for new platforms and longer duration projects to ensure a more stable income. They turned to TV series and sequels that had up to that point been strongly associated with the commercial domain of the film industry, while trying to keep up their artistic level and values. As an outcome, a range of highly popular political drama and crime TV series were created, such as *The Killing*, *The Castle*, and *The Bridge*, collectively known as “Nordic Noir”. With their high international popularity and recognition, they became of increasing interest to talent, along with professionals’ increasing search of international experience, which has posed challenges to talent availability for local feature film projects (DFI.dk).

Methodology

The following chapter sets to provide methodological transparency into the knowledge created in this dissertation. First, I elaborate on the epistemology of the practice based approach. Second, I account for my research design as a consequence of my epistemological stance. Third, I elaborate on what actually transpired in the actual research process and the adjustments made along the way. Finally, I will provide insights into the coding process and the relation between data and analysis that constitutes the three papers in this dissertation.

This study is based on data conducted over a seven year research period from 2009-2016 on the Danish film industry. This seven year period is divided in two main time slots based on two separate research designs, the first conducted as a part of the Imagine research project at CBS from September 2009-December 2010 and the second initiated as part of my PhD in October 2012- September 2015.

The first research design

The first research project examined career mobility in the Danish film industry. This research was informed by two other data sets conducted of the first author of the paper, but the empirical analysis that went into the second paper was merely based on 40 in depth interviews conducted by me and my co-author Chris Mathieu.

The first research design that resulted in 40 narrative career trajectory interviews with duration between 1-4 hours was initially not informed by the practice based approach described above but instead a narrative approach. It was initiated as part of the Imagine project, a bigger research program on creative industries, located at CBS. Initially the interest of this research was on career mobility and boundaries that organize careers the Danish film industry. The narrative approach is said to be good for examining the richness and ambiguities of lived experiences (Riessman, 2008). Narratives have been argued to be of great relevance for career studies as

they allow for a longitudinal account that is not merely based on the objective part of career outcomes but also how meaning is added to these life events as part of the overall career ‘story’ (Bujold, 2004). Narrative is a construction of the lived lives and the story created is only one of many possible stories of a person’s career, however as this research design was created with an emphasis on boundaries and career mobility, we asked every respondent to emphasize challenges they had encountered over time and how they had overcome those while ensuring follow-up questions to how they had overcome the challenges or boundaries encountered.

Since careers *per se* is a form of sense making of the series of work practices an individual has performed over time, careers are often either constructed cognitively or as part of a describing a story (Cochran, 1990).

The sample: The sample was generated by tracking down who had worked on the critically acclaimed and commercially successful films in the 10 years from 1999 to 2009. This research was conducted online on film credits found on the international film database IMDB and the Danish equivalent at the DFI. We selected film workers based on their experience level, and continuity of work in feature films, which is the least mobile and hardest to enter sector within the Danish film industry. We also strove to obtain a representative gender balance. In this sense we are dealing with a high-profile extreme case to understand mobility or boundary issues in careers. The design contained different occupational groups: producers, directors, cinematographers, sound engineers and editors. The sample lists held between 15-20 names per occupational group ordered into occurrence and hence this sample constituted the elite of the film workers over the ten year period. This sample was perceived as the best sample to provide insight about career development, durability and success in overcoming boundaries and changes in the industry. The informants were spread amongst different head functions of

the feature film production; 9 editors, 11 producers (8 of them were executive producers), 5 directors, 10 cinematographers, 5 sound engineers. This picture was however more muddy in practice because of the blurred lines of occupations, as some members of the sample worked in more than one occupation over their career. one is both editor and director, another both director and cinematographer and a third has been a producer, cinematographer and director. In order to overcome this, we categorized them under the occupation where they had the most experience within feature film.

We double checked the lists, to see if they could be validated by a very experienced director/cinematographer/producer who had been in the Danish film industry since 1963, won Oscars and been involved in various important institutional positions such as at DFI. He added a few people and removed one from the list, but validated the rest of the list.

Web-research on webpages of references IMDB and DFI were used to select people who had made at least one or two major feature films and were categorized with numbers of how many feature film productions they had been credited on over time. The most experienced 15 people were ordered in a table listing the experience, ongoing collaboration partner, contact information and interesting articles, interviews in media and other internet pages e.g. DFI, IMDB, FAFF, Ekkofilm, *YouTube* and a broader google search. By systematically going through all the films the individual film worker was credited for on IMDB, it was possible to make a map of people with whom they have collaborated more than once, twice and the ruptures in collaboration with this partner when looking at their credits, to see if they made something without involving the other partner. These aspects of collaborating and ending collaboration were included in the questions posed during the interview. This resulted in the interviews being very thorough in the aspects of collaborations and career coupling.

Semi-structured interviews: Consistently we asked respondents to start their narrative from their initial interest in film and then followed the individuals' trajectories over the course of their careers. Each interview was initiated with the same question: "If we go back to the very start, how and when did you then get interested in film" whereupon the interview ventured into going into various different challenges, opportunities, practices, collaborations and network stories, and ended with future career wishes, dreams and worries and plans. In doing this we emphasized challenges and opportunities during the career. All careers were drawn on a piece of A3 paper during the interview in order to illustrate important career points of particular impact and illustrate the trajectory over time. These drawings worked as a common frame to refer back in the interview and dig deeper into different aspects and relations.

Interview locations: Most of the editors and cinematographers preferred to be the interview at Kilen, CBS, where I booked the big meeting room, because of its nice view and space (as these occupations are very visually oriented), compared to the more crowded office space. Other respondents preferred meeting in cafés or in their offices. Most of these people were in production and took time in the evening for an interview in their room. All producers, with the exception of one, were interviewed in their offices, which also explain something about the place in film. Producers have more permanent spaces whereas the real freelancers are free floating and preferred going to CBS for the interview. People working at "Film City" in Avedøre mostly invited me to their offices or editing room, because they were more or less permanently connected to those spaces taking part in most of Zentropa's productions. Producer interviews generally were shorter, lasting around 1½ hour and often interrupted by phones ringing and people entering the office with a problem that needed the producer's immediate attention.

Gaining access: All respondents were invited by an official e-mail presenting the project on careers in creative industries and the importance of studying this phenomenon. Furthermore, they were informed of their right for anonymity, what they could possibly gain from the study, duration and place of the interviews, which was flexible in order to make the access easier for freelancers who at times are very busy and other times have plenty of time to go for an interview somewhere in town. All responses were replied to almost the same day in very brief and positive notes like “that sounds very interesting and of course I will participate, call me on xxx”. This indicated the high speed and the importance of social networks that is part of the industry and responses seemed spontaneous. This also shows something fascinating about the field, that people are mostly very trusting and open. As I went along interviewing people about their careers it was clear to me that this is because the normative code in the field is that people help each other and are open to opportunities, even if of a peculiar nature. Also the response, “that sounds really interesting,” is a key element as most of the careers are driven by fascinations and taste, which will be elaborated on later on in this dissertation.

(Participant) Observations: To get a deeper understanding of the film industry that is a small and where private and personal lives are highly entangled and difficult to separate I later followed project development and filming processes via on-site observation. However, much organizing takes place in the social activities outside official office hours. I realized quickly that the best possible insight would be gained through an ethnographic study. Observations were initiated august 2013 and ended in February 2014. During this time I observed people work and as well daily relational interactions at Nimbus Film. I observed at different sites taking the project *Antboy* as a starting point. The first months I observed the work of the *Antboy* producers during preproduction of *Antboy II*. I was positioned next to the

producers office in a semi attached room, a location that allowed me to listen to all conversations but did not provide much visual insights of the work. In this sense I was unintentionally performing a non-participant observation study. The opportunities this throw off was undisturbed observations of daily practices uninfluenced by my presence. The limitations to this were ethical aspects of people saying confidential things, because they forgot or did not notice I was there. The other limitation was the observations were limited visually most of the time and I had difficulties seeing the practices 'from within'. I sneaked a peak now and then and also moved to the couch in the producers' office when possible. This office was next to the two company owners/executive producers' office, and this allowed me to observe the relation between Nimbus and the *Antboy* projects. During lunch I participated in conversations at the dining room and was part of the debates to the extent that was possible with my film knowledge. This site allowed me to understand the between projects transcending organizations at Nimbus. From that I observed peoples conversations, peoples relations, knowledge sharing, aesthetic judgement and taste-making, projects' developments over different stages and as well the Nimbus spirit. The amount of people attending lunch differed greatly and it freelancers came and passed over time providing deep insights into my interest in permanency and change in Project based organizations and the transcending organizations. *Antboy II*'s funding application was submitted to DFI on November 4th 2013. While the project application was at DFI and the project development was on pause, I left Nimbus for from November 4th to beginning of January. In the meantime I interviewed film consultants.

The second half of the observations initiated first week of January, were conducted from a different location, namely the basement at Nimbus Film. At this time around Christmas 2013, *Antboy* was approved production funding from DFI and the project realization phase was initiated in the basement of Nimbus and all

temporary staff got office space in the basement. Observations were conducted in the production room, but eventually as more and more people were hired onto the project and the space got crowded I was asked to move. I got permission to stay in the office of the art department wherein property masters, costumé team and production team were located. Over time this office filled up with materials and the over crowdedness made my presence superfluous- all in all I was an attachment to the project and the project's needs supersedes every other need.

Coding: During data collection, initial coding was conducted based on envivo coding and memoing (Emerson et al, 1995) whereby new themes to pursue further continuously emerged. Hence analyses were conducted as an iterative process of going back and forth between data and theorizing using a grounded theory like approach (Charmaz, 2006). In this rich data set various themes emerged: 1) art worlds; 2) semi-permanent work relations; 3) collaborations; 4) learning practices; 5) embodied knowledge; 6) persistence and change; 7) mobility; 8) career boundaries and self-management; and 10) aesthetics. This first paper merges the following themes: aesthetics, careers, collaborations and learning. Coding was done as a section by section method (Charmaz, 2006) providing following sub-codes: embodied knowledge felt as intuition, learning taste, practicing, aesthetic co-creation, changing practices and splitting up.

The second research design

The second research design extended the practice based perspective by epistemologically taking on a practice based approach. By this I was seeking to further explore aesthetics as transcending organization in the film industry and

overcome some of the limitations of the first narrative interview design pursuing a practice based research design (Nicolini 2012; Gherardi, 2012).

Conducting a practice based study

The practice based approach, also referred to by others as the practice lens, idiom or standpoint (Nicolini, 2013) can overall be described as a specific way of conducting research wherein the researcher describes “important features of the world we inhabit as something that is routinely made and re-made in practice using tools, discourse and our bodies” (Nicolini, 2013: 2). This implies looking for patterns of activities or so-called organized doings and sayings or certain “ways of doing things” (Gherardi, 2012, 2011). This implies that any observation of an activity might be part of a practice but what this practice is only revealed empirically through manifold observations and seeking to understand how those activities are connected and related to other activities on other sites.

Methodologically understanding phenomena from a practice based perspective involves seeing how “the doings, sayings, tasks (e.g. writing a comment) and projects (e.g. writing an article) hang together according to a characteristic and meaningful organization” (Nicolini 2013: 165) that aggregates constituted meaningful ‘blocks’ or, in this definition, practices. Practices are always interconnected and entwined into each other (Nicolini, 2013) and hence talking about boundaries as predefined demarcation lines goes against the premises of the practice based approach and the flat ontology it applies. Practices cannot and should not be analyzed as isolated bounded entities as any organization is a bundle, array, net or mesh of practices coming together (Schatzki 2002, 2009). They overlap and constitute one another:

“What makes them (sites) interesting is that context and contextualized entity constitute one another: what the entity or event is is tied to the context, just as the

nature and identity of the context is tied to the entity or event (among others) ...A site is inseparable from that of which it is the site.” (Schatzki 2009: 468).

Empirical boundaries defined by the practitioners as constructions of practices are acceptable as practices can be understood as bounded, providing limitations and opportunities for practitioners in art worlds. However, it must be noticed that these boundaries are constantly reenacted and as a result changed.

Practices are learned and embodied and hence language cannot always fully capture the understanding that underlies practice as language and practices cannot be separated as the latter is inherently part of most practices. Resultantly in order to conduct a practice based study most would agree that the best data are first hand observations. However, certain kinds of practice oriented interview techniques where thick description of concrete events allow people to in detail recall and describe what they did and said (Swidler, 2001) are viable. Most practice based scholars agree on the importance of ethnographic studies as an access point for learning practices (Gherardi, 2013; Rouleau, 2013; Sminia & De Rond, 2012) instead of the emphasis on culture and organizational life more generally where individuals tend to be the pivotal point for the observations (Van Maanen, 2006). Despite many commonalities such as observing the organizing of things, change and stability as well as the underlying latent structures that are embedded in the organizational culture (Van Maanen, 2006) practice based ethnographies emphasize the practices performed by practitioners as the unit of analysis. This involves knowing in practice how work is done through embodied, sensible and emotional knowledge acquired through learning to become a practitioner as a collective learning activity (Gherardi, 2011). For the researcher this implies that in order to understand the latent organizing of aesthetics and taste, the researcher must become sufficiently part of the practices in order to know them as most knowledge is tacitly embodied. Nearness to the practices of study comes with the

risk of “going native” within the ethnographic studies and implies a risk of never returning back home, or being able to distance oneself and write up the study (Whyte, 1943). This can be linked to George Simmel’s study on the stranger who is part of the group yet remains distant from other natives. The stranger comes today but leaves tomorrow and is hence distant and not emerged into the group’s history, factions and practices, which gives a unique position to carry out special tasks that require some sense of neutrality (Simmel, 1908 translation by Levin, 1971). Balancing distance and nearness is a balancing act wherein sufficient insight requires being part of the practices while distance is also essential in order to analyze the data and tell the overall story that provide a theoretical contribution while seeing what is of less importance for the reader. For the practitioner even the small details in the story is of great importance, but in order to theorize such simplifications a necessary sacrifice is needed in order to deliver a clear theoretical argument. This balancing act will be described in more detail in the chapter on coding. In the following section I will introduce my second research design based on the above considerations about conducting a practice based study.

Emphasizing aesthetics

The design involved the following steps in the attempt to learn more about the aesthetics as organizing and transcending organization in the Danish film industry. Based on the empirically emerging themes of the data set, and Gherardi’s concept ‘taste making’, I had an interest in exploring further how aesthetics and tastes are practiced at work at different sites in order to understand the organizing of careers. Following this perspective changes the empirical foci in following ways:

- *From action to passion. Instead of focusing on the subjects, the researcher asks: through what mechanisms is this kind of ‘active passion’ performed?*

- *From ‘who acts’ to ‘what occurs’.* Instead of focusing on action, the researcher turns to events and asks: what occurs, how is the effect produced, which mediators are present?
- *From making to feeling.* The researcher asks: how can certain people tentatively help events to occur? How is feeling actively accomplished?

(Gheradi, 2009: 539)

Taste-making as a pragmatic understanding of perspective opened up certain understandings and questions to pursue further. This perspective provided the following foci in my research:

- How are people selected based on their taste?
- Why do people start collaborating?
- How do they practice taste and how do practitioners talk about taste?
- Why do collaborations break up?
- How are these practices interlinked with other practices at various sites?

In this I was looking for the transcending organizers of work and employment relations from a taste-making perspective. This interest evolved as a result of my prior interest in taste-making over the course of careers, extending this perspective to further understand selection from a taste-making perspective. Aesthetic judgement is practices on a continuous basis in different sites wherein people and materials are characterized as real artists/non-artists, good or bad art, strange or cool and so on. As noted earlier practices require both creating a methodology that allow the unfolding of practices as arrays of activities (Nicolini, 2013; Schatzki et al, 2001; Schatzki 2009) while capturing the fact that these are socially embedded as “ways of doing things” persisting with a degree of stability that is described in this dissertation as organization.

Methodology for studying the becoming

Theodor Schatzki's site ontology and Czarniawska's shadowing based on Bruno Latours "follow the actor" dictum was developed into a way to unfold the knotted networks that construct actors (Czarniawska, 2013). Nicolini developed a practice based methodology for studying organizations; Schatzki suggested a theoretical construct of the practices providing an overview of the social phenomenon through following three steps:

- 1) Identify the action that composes it
- 2) Identify the bundles of practices of which these are part (using the local names as starting point).
- 3) Identify other nets of practices to which the practice arrangements are tied.

This is an approach Nicolini strongly criticized for its lack of empirical orientation. Practices, their interlinkage must be empirically defined. Starting with the phenomenon itself, one then identifies a starting point for where this phenomenon is practiced. Whereas Nicolini takes on the entire idea of "following the actor" in his example of telemonitoring, I see this perspective as incompatible with the ontology of the practice based approach that as emphasized by Gherardi (2011) seeks to also explain stability and persistence of practices and "ways of doing things".

Ensuring to also study ways of doing things I was looking for repetition and patterns as well as the boundaries of what people could acknowledge as good or bad taste when judging other practitioners.

Starting point for observing

The question is where to even start observing these practices? This challenge was discussed by Barbara Czarniawska (2007) as organizing of phenomena is

performed at various places and occasions and can be difficult to capture (Czarniawska, 2007). As argued earlier on, defining practices remains an empirical question (Nicolini, 2013) and as such where to start observing a phenomenon depends on the empirical context and the phenomenon. In my case in order to observe aesthetics and employment relationships, the film project which is a hodgepodge of various aesthetic and temporal practices coming together around developing an aesthetic product, entails the first step of this design was starting with the project as a site for observing aesthetic organizing. The best possible site to learn about the transcending tacit organizing of employment relationships and work in the film industry is through the activities in the project. Following the project was my initial plan as projects can be understood as events allowing for multi-site analysis, as projects provide “sequences of activities that unfold gradually or suddenly, and trigger distinctive networks across multiple levels of analysis” (Maoret, Massa and Jones, 2015: 428).

Since the employment relationship starts with selection, and in this case with selecting for aesthetics, it seemed natural to start looking at the project from this point onwards. Project ideas are constantly developed, starting with a spark of interest or an idea of a person or between few people. Such ideas constantly appear and either they are pursued into a project or they vanish with lost fascination. Most project ideas are never developed further and even fewer get produced into a movie. If more people are involved in developing the nascent ideas, they often only meet at random occasions as a side activity to the production of more mature projects. This made it uninteresting to follow a project from its premature phase, as it doesn't give much insight into employment relationships and collaborations. A project is recognized and labelled as such in the database by

the production firm, until then it is an idea with less attachment to the firm and in greater risk of being discarded and forgotten.

Hence it was essential for me to get access to a project and not an idea, and preferably a project with a certain intensity of activities, which in this specific case implies a project that has been granted financial support for development.

This research design was intended to understand employment relationships from a taste-making perspective in two different art worlds following two very different film production companies representing the main two separate aesthetic domains within the Danish film industry. One belonging to the high arts or arthouse domain and the other being part of the commercially oriented domain. I initiated this work with an assumption that different aesthetics were played out in very different practices within the two distinctive art worlds.

Research process

From insights from prior research and discussions with colleagues who had conducted research on different production firms from the Danish film industry, I selected two companies from each of the aesthetic domains; art house films belonging to the *Dogme 95* movement, practicing in a social realistic genre, and the other domain described as the commercially oriented firms producing films within the family–comedy genre. These domains are described by various practitioners in the film industry and institutionalized in the state funding system having an artistic fund and a commercial fund (DFI.dk). The two companies selected for the art house domain were selected as they were the initiators of the *Dogme* movement: Nimbus Film and Zentropa and from the commercial domain I selected Grasten Film and Fridthjof film. Film projects in the Danish film industry are in their initial idea stages of preproduction not publicly registered and even kept secret to outsider of the production company. As a result when I initiated my research I didn't know what projects that was on the drawing boards within the

different production companies. Neither did I know what stage of development projects were in when the executive producers invited me in on a project. I asked for it to be in the initial stages which turned out to be a wider concept than I knew a priori.

The next pivotal step was gaining access to different projects from each of the two domains. The access point was through the executive producers of film production companies following different methods to get access. Starting with Nimbus Film, which was known to develop much of the Danish film talent, indicating that they are the main front runners of the art house domain, I decided to follow them. I contacted the two founders and owners via mail, asking if they had any interesting project on the drawing board I could follow. The information I provided them, about the research question was to investigate how aesthetic selection happens. In Nimbus film one project team agreed to take me onboard. I followed the same approach to the two companies from the commercial domain. In Fridthjof Film, after a meeting and interview with the owner, I was appointed to a TV series as this was the project that was in the right state of the process to get sufficient insight into the stage where the project got funding and the team was selected. In Grasten Film I had an initial interview with the owner but no projects were available for ethnographic research at that time. The commercial domain seemed to follow a different and very brief selection practice. This was interesting as it showed a difference in temporality linked with aesthetic judgement, which indicates a strong connectedness between the two. Meanwhile the intensity of *Antboy* activities at Nimbus required daily observations requiring my full attention. This is when I became aware of my limited capacity for zooming in and out of various practices.

A study of the transcending organization goes as the concept also imply beyond the single firms requiring more than the organizational ethnographic method (Van Maanen, 2006). Hence observing this phenomenon is not an easy task and would require multi-site ethnographic methods (Marcus, 1995; Rouleau, de Rond & Musca, 2014; Zilber, 2014). These methods seems like a good starting point but their notion of field (Zilber, 2014, 2016) does not adhere to the practice based site ontology (Schatzki 2009; Nicolini 2013) as the understanding of a field tends to treat the phenomenon in a too static manner e.g. observing the same phenomenon in different countries via on site life video recordings (Smets, Burke and Jarzabkowski, 2014). However, an interesting study by Nathalie Raulet-Croset introduced a spatial shadowing technique tracing people as they move around in and between different spaces in which they live and work. Since I was not shadowing people but rather the project and the various practices that were connected to it, I learned that following more projects as multi-sited shadowing was too ambitious for one person to conduct alone. I decided to center on the *Antboy* project and discard the other projects that had now moved into production on widely spread geographical locations. By this I lost some of the insights into different domains; however, my data provided other interesting and important insight.

Zooming in and out- different sites

I followed these practices close up, zooming in on the practices that entered the film project *Antboy* (see appendix A for a visual overview of the different sites). I was sitting next to the two *Antboy* producers through most of the preproduction phase three times a week and every day in periods with intensified project activities in the office hours from 9 am to 4 pm. I knew that most activities continued on other sites after these hours e.g. people going to the cinema together,

evening phone calls, mails and conversations with film friends from the industry, beyond the limits of my negotiated access. Most of these experiences of importance to the project were discussed in the office the next morning or over lunch which gave me certain insights into those activities.

I coincidentally got insights into decision making on the selection of the collaboration partner of a VFX² company and the practices of selecting sub-functions to each head of department of the project. Because of the sensitivity of this data I decided to interview the other producers at Nimbus Film about their selection practices, knowing that secondary accounts are only second best to real life accounts from a practice based perspective. However it can be argued that people are able to recall and describe quite vividly the practices that they have been part of, as memories can often be recalled as a film running through their heads (Swidler, 2001). However, certain interview techniques must be used ensuring to ask for concrete and descriptive examples, asking them to talk and describe in depth as much as possible. This resulted in five additional producer interviews providing insights into selection on 11 different projects in total. I zoomed out (Nicolini 2009a) to understand the broader site (Schatzki et al, 2001) Antboy was embedded in which implied a broader seeking to learn more about the practices of Nimbus as a company. This was done through interviews with 9 different practitioners at Nimbus: a producer assistant, the reader, producers, the two company founders; eating lunch at the company every day; watching all the Nimbus films over time; and tracing the company in different media over time. Essential was the lunch table where knowledge was shared, temporary employees became present and the consistence of permanent staff, conversations and tastes were discussed, shared and learned. I learned a lot about Nimbus's filmic

² In filmmaking, visual effects (abbreviated VFX) are the processes by which imagery is created and/or manipulated outside the context of a live action shot.

aesthetics and culture by sitting at this table, however I discovered that it takes years to learn and know sufficient artistic film references to be part of those conversations and be accepted as a practitioner. At the end of the 6 months in the company I had sufficient aesthetic knowledge to make uncouth distinctions between good and bad taste. I also learned from observing and being taught the basics of manuscripts and filmic storytelling, by the Reader at Nimbus Film. The Readers role is to select good manuscripts from bad ones of the many collaboration requests Nimbus gets from external parties. In this process I got an initial understanding of the practices of evaluating good storytelling from bad storytelling based on different storytelling models.

At Nimbus the physical spaces had a very natural selection effect for the data collection. Rooms and the building with different floors separated the film production phases and the different projects simultaneously produced at Nimbus. The second floor was the location for an external accounting company. On the first floor the producers had their offices working on different film ideas and productions. The ground floor had meeting rooms, extra rooms for visiting directors, a big shared office for all the assistants and a common dining area including a small tea kitchen. The basement was a spare area set aside for projects that got funding and were at the very last stage of preproduction before going into production.

At first stages of the *Antboy* production most activities were centered on one location, the producers' room. Over time as more people entered the project, the activities spread into more activities at various places. All of the first part (4 months) happened on the first floor of the company. After getting the financial grants from the DFI production activities moved to the basement, and I was asked to move along too. At first I thought that it was a degrading of my position but after a week I realized that actually the basement, my new location, was an

upgrade to where all the interesting activities were going to take place in the next two months. It became clear to me when the director moved to the basement too, and people were getting really excited about the new location, the basement is only for the few out of many ideas that actually get financial support and are going to be produced into a movie.

By moving to the new location, I lost track of the processes in the main producers' office, hence didn't have as much feeling for the collaborations between the producers and the other head functions and the strategic decisions and problems which are mainly discussed and solved in the producer's room. However, the basement, as my new location gave me other valuable opportunities, as the director and the entire crew started working down there, this brought me closer to the work performed by other head functions in the film production. This allowed me to observe practices of materializing the vision, the many practices of various departments in film making, the collaborations between head functions and temporality and permanency in and between the temporary and permanent organizations.

In this last stage the project's practices intensified, more and more practitioners entering splitting into sub-practices, which in this specific situation are the practices that in aggregate constitute the preproduction of film making. Materials and aesthetics were at this point in time taking up increasingly more space adding flesh to the project's initial imaginative aesthetics of the vision (Styhre, 2009). Also the temporal became very present as the deadline of production initiation approached, intensifying work load, decision making, and aesthetic judgement in work and collaborations. My own position in this process reflects well this crowdedness of practices, having initiated my own work station, to moving around and fitting in, to the last days where I had a stool to sit on trying to squeeze myself into a corner, but getting the sense of being in the way even so, leaving the field to

give up my space for the benefit of the film and its practitioners. One important thing I learned was that no matter what, the film always comes first, and people need to contribute and unselfishly sacrifice their own professional pride of their function to the greater good of the film.

After getting deeper into the vision of *Antboy* I realized that sequels are different from single projects. *Antboy* was a new project that for many reasons was full of surprises, and at the same time got a lot of recognition both nationally and internationally. The uniqueness of the project made it less generalizable to other projects but at the same time it opened up other exciting options for research that provided insights into the sequential relation between the permanent and the temporary organization. The other challenge to proceed with regarding the original plan was that it was difficult to observe selection as this happens inside the heads of people from watching prior art works of a person in the loop for hiring, this practice is done through watching film clips, mood boards and movies made by a person and hence as such selection for taste is not easy to understand. The luck was that *Antboy II* exceptionally had two producers hired who discussed taste and judgement with each other which gave important insights to answer my research question. Similar taste-making was ongoing around the dining table and other social events which I discovered when zooming out.

Additional interviews conducted in 2015

The last paper of this dissertation was initiated in October 2013 after having followed *Antboy* intensively for three months, and is based on in vivo coding. Following the project and zooming in and out allowed me to understand the relation between the project *Antboy* and the production company Nimbus Film. Writing this paper was a response to a call for papers on temporary organizations from the journal *Organization Studies* in September 2014. Rewriting this paper

required additional data collection with a more theory-driven focus on the relation between the project and the company, requiring further strategic insight at the time that *Antboy* III had been produced, which added another incentive to follow up previous research.

Negotiating and renegotiating my position in the field

One of the challenges encountered in my research was the lack of opportunity to ask follow-up questions during the field work. The advantage of the *Antboy* production being so intense and spanning over a short period of time was that it made it possible to follow the entire process in detail and make observations every day. This time span consequently also implied an intensive workload and intense time pressure to manage the deadline for applications and afterwards production during winter, because it had to be filmed during winter. Therefore, there was very little time for chatting and follow-up questions and I had to settle for a follow up interview after the application deadline for DFI, two months into the ethnography. When reentering the field once again my access was renegotiated. Luckily I knew all the deadlines and called when I knew the DFI funding decision was made and communicated to Nimbus's producers. I called and asked if I could rejoin them. My prior office space was no longer available as it was needed for other purposes. They seemed reluctant to let me reenter as my initial focus had been on selection and in this stage the team had already been assembled. I argued that I found new interesting themes to follow in the project, skepticism spread but despite that I was allowed access. I think the producer knew how fascinations can change. I had to account for my new interests later on, and the skepticism seemed to vanish not least with the argument that they got to approve everything written before publishing it. This was done in all papers. First all references were copy pasted out and sent for approval to the individual quoted. This did not allow the quoted

individual to see the full document until later on, but it was necessary in order to prevent respondents from reading the unapproved quotations of others. A second round of approval of the final paper, was first sent to the company owners followed by directors, producers, writer and at last the other head of departments, following the hierarchical work ranking that exist in film production within the Danish film industry.

I traced the *Antboy* project's meeting with the audience. I was in this process reading critics' and audience comments, through newspaper articles, magazines, online materials and social platforms, following this carefully from my initial entrance into the field in August 2013 until the last movie was released 11 February 2016. After getting the funding on 18 December I renegotiated my access with the producer and reentered *Antboy III* the first week of January and followed it until the production phase.

Visual and written field 'notes'

From a pragmatist perspective, real accounts are rich and in order to create meaning around these accounts one must select and sense make retrospectively of the happenings (Weick, 1996). In order to minimize retrospective accounts mixed into the accounts of what transpired, as these are interpretations and therefore already part of analyzing the data, I attempted to write down everything that happened in real time as detailed as possible including materials, saying and doings, aesthetic descriptions and feelings. This complexity made it difficult at times to keep up with the documentation of all events happening on the sites, which was solved by writing down notes and essential quotes that were central to the things happening. I am aware that by doing so the first selection and analysis of the data had already happened. After important events had happened I took "time off from observations" to fill in holes and recreate the conversations and

materials as precisely as possible. This was always done within few hours while in fresh memory.

I created a new file each day of observation and named them by time and place. Most of my research was writing down in a third person point of view. Writing from a first person point of view is more relevant when being more participative in the field which was limited in my research for various reasons, such as busy days and no time for follow up questions, not being able to participate fully, but trying to understand what was going on, which was difficult at first as an outsider (Simmel, 1908).

The third person perspective is focused on describing what others are doing and saying – a narrating form. This point of view is especially good at conveying others' words and actions (Emerson et al 1995). I applied the 3rd person perspective as this is more suitable when documenting a practice based study, seeking to be as precise in description of practices conveyed as possible. This perspective thus lacks the feelings which according to Gherardi (2012) are essential to understanding practices and feelings cannot and should not be separated from practices because often people are informed by experiences that extend the cognitive and observable apparatus. Knowing is a process that involves all senses and tastes and feelings (Gherardi 2012) and hence the ethnographer would be required to include as many senses in the field work as possible which is closer to first person perspectives. By adding a column in my field notes with my own interpretations, reactions and feelings, this allowed for accounting for both 1st and 3rd person research perspectives. The third column in my coding sheet contained initial coding such as In vivo codes, jottings with interpretations of events, and conceptual theory coding (Emerson et al., 1995). Memoing, recorded on my phone was done after each interview in order to summarize interesting

debates and ideas. These were transcribed in the same manner as the rest of the data.

Images and video recordings were used as a supplement to the other data. Aesthetics provide a deeper and more nuanced understanding the organizational meaning and should not be undermined when coupling the visuals and texts tightly together so that one elaborates on the other and vice versa (Giorgi & Glynn, 2016). To provide such insights I took photos and videos as part of my ethnographic documentation whenever possible (see appendix A). Unfortunately, I had limited approval from field participants to use these visual elements in this dissertation.

Coding: Relation between theory and data

When talking about practices as a unit of analysis it is important to define practices and in doing this also providing certain boundaries of a practice, while not forgetting that practices are both constituted by and constitute sites in which they are inherent parts. It is important for the sake of clear communication with the reader in academic texts to distinguish between practices and sacrifice the complexity of activities that in aggregate constitute a practice in order to communicate these in a sufficient manner. A practice-based perspective provides in depth descriptive data with many nuances and different facets and options for theoretical framing. In this dissertation many details of work has been deselected in order to stay within the paper-based dissertation format and ensure a clean communication within the selected and defined research topic. Although this has at times been painful to reduce the beauty of the complexity of what happened, I believe this has ensured a cleaner communication with the reader. Unfolding the tangle of practices can never be done in their full complexity as any reproduction of the world we study is a construct of this reality (Nicolini, 2013). It is hence naive to strive for empirical, theory-bereft descriptions because we all have

preconceptions and prior knowledge of the world that comes to play a role for our perception of the world and what we observe. In the worst case we are unaware of these things and in the best case we are reflexive and informed by theories. However, we should seek to challenge them and not let them control what is observed and further investigated in the process. This research has, as said above, been strongly influenced by practice theory, and more specifically taste-making. However, this did not limit new themes such as temporary organizations' relation to the permanent organization and the tensions this created for individual practitioners in the project. Themes were constantly emerging while being in the field, some more theory-driven, others created through the in vivo codes. This method of moving back and forth between empirical key concepts can be classified as using an abductive approach (Van Maanen, Sørensen & Mitchell, 2007).

I offered my help for translating, writing things, anything they could think of many times at the beginning, but they didn't take on the opportunity because of my lack of practical knowledge of practicing in the field, I assume. I occasionally helped clean up, pick up coffee and translate texts to English, but it takes years of experience to become a full practitioner in the role of the producer. The first person point of view is used as I was the narrator of the stories experienced in the field; this entailed that the stories told are conveyed as the researchers' unfolding experiences of the field from that point of view. This perspective allows the reader to understand the researchers' participation and co-construction of the field.

My position as researcher in the Danish film industry 2009-2015

This research does not limit itself to the period of my PhD scholarship as my understanding of the field and the data collection already started years before.

To start with the beginning of my research journey in the film industry, I was hired in Summer 2009 onto the Imagine project at CBS as a research assistant for

Chris Mathieu. At that time I lived in a flat that I shared with a friend of mine who was a sports event TV editor working as a freelancer in the Danish TV industry. This was the starting point for this journey that I have pursued within research in creative industries.

For several months I attended various social events such as premier and release parties seeking to be involved with film workers as much as possible to get a deeper insight into the unofficial and social aspect of the industry. During the time that I lived with the above mentioned editor in TV sports I also met his friends in feature film production who informed me about the interesting people and places to go. I became involved in a very small company named *Beo film* which mainly made documentary films, but here I learned a lot about the basic norms and social rules of the game in the film industry. From some of the presentations in the Cinema project I became connected with some of the assistants at a small film company. I became accepted and invited to their parties but realized when I started a family so that I couldn't keep up as it involves a lot of social activities and a quite unhealthy lifestyle and attitudes that are important to perform or "act," which were difficult while nurturing a family. It was fun though and equipped me for my further research in the industry, as well as giving me practical insight to important gender and lifecourse issues in the industry. While being on maternity leave I conducted some of the interviews that had been hard to establish especially with people with international careers.

The questions that emanated from working on the first paper was what role taste and aesthetics play in collaborations, learning, practices and not least how selection for aesthetic skills is possible. My fascination and curiosity was that I had learned through my prior research on careers that recruitment in the film industry was carried out based on personal relations and that success originated in a well-functioning team where all contribute to the desired taste, style and

expression and have competencies for accomplishing this. As these processes are profoundly grounded in people learning taste as a common practice, and having a Master degree in Human Resource Management, I knew how many wrong recruitments take place in general, I was puzzled about how people who make hiring decisions in the film industry are able to identify and select the right people for the job based on “fluffy” and unmeasurable parameters such as taste and style. The paradox that struck me was how can recruiters in the film industry, against all odds so often get recruitment right, when in more stable industries it often goes wrong? I decided to pursue this question further in my research and prepared to conduct a practice based study to obtain an answer.

Moving to the producers’ offices which is the established staff, whereas before hanging out with the producer assistants that are usually employed for fewer years as a student job, made a major change in my perception and the data available. In the new situation I was not as involved in social activities but instead I observed the work of producers and other staff later on within the company during office hours during my PhD. I was now in the “grown-ups” area which was a very different story, although it was just 3 years later! I was no longer as young and not just there to hang out and hear all their funny stories, I was a bit too old now to be a ‘newcomer’ and having a child and a family was also changed my status and approach, as well as the enhanced sophistication of conducting a PhD project. It closed the doors of access outside the work related field because most newcomers become socialized when they are much younger, and it felt like a big gap in life and interests (about a 5 year difference- most newcomers are in their mid-20s and I was in my early 30s). This gave me insights of how the professional side of the career is compared to the full story of becoming a full member – a part of the family. It’s not the same and the only way I could have gotten the same access in the new place, where most people also had children and were more experienced,

was by knowing everything about all movies and being able to actively perform in film making, which was not the case. This made me very sad initially as I knew how it could have been, and how important understanding practices from the inside are. However, I was also aware that I had entered a different group, and that my new perspective and position afforded me new insights into how careers work in this world. You have to play the game first, the social game and be a film enthusiast. Being the outsider gave me no access to the social world outside the work activities, but it gave me other opportunities because I was seen as someone cool to have around because *Antboy* had its own “scientist,” and I was presented as such to newcomers on the production. However, at times this position caused distance to practices and a few awkward moments. Second order cybernetics, in this sense means that when a researcher investigate a system, they inherently become part of it and as a result coproduce it while also themselves being influenced by it. The unavoidable second order cybernetics of the researcher made me indirectly part of the construction of the movie *Antboy* as something special and new and created an additional extra hype around the project. My position as the *Antboy* scientist at the same time helped me legitimize my position contributing to the hype of the *Antboy* projects. I was also influenced greatly by being part of this process and my knowledge including my taste and passion for the project was changed as I learned about the project.

It was a different situation than before and the assistants were now at least 5 years younger than me. Most of them were students at Copenhagen University which made it a very different position because I was introduced and known as the scientist (associated with their lecturers and asked if I know them- which I actually do); some even asked me for advice with their university assignments. The producers were, although young and just getting established, a bit different and very busy on the project and balancing their work and family life. Therefore, the

social part was less, which was also the case in general when people had children and faced the problem of work-life balance in an industry with a high degree of competition and pressure for career self-management. When I entered the field, *Antboy* I was in the distribution stage and *Antboy* II was moving fast forward in the preproduction phase with a not very experienced team and two new-born mothers having the producer roles. This explains why there was no time for chatting and being social, not even with the scientist.

Data fact sheet

For the *Antboy* research, a total of 30 interviews were conducted with 22 informants, who were relatively evenly distributed among the permanent organization, the projects, and the Danish film industry (see Appendix D for a list of interviews). The interviews amounted to 39,3 recorded hours with an average duration of 1 hour and 20 minutes. They were transcribed and subjected to initial analysis in their original language (Danish or English). See the data fact sheet in appendix providing an overview of the total amount of data entering into this dissertation.

Chapter 5: Human Resource Selection for aesthetic skills³

Abstract

HR selection seems to differ from the way much existing literature theorizes about it, emphasizing the rational and measurable aspects of selection, which has created a HR science-practitioner gap. This paper seeks to close this gap by bringing in aesthetics to selection, adding on the non-rational and non-measurable aspects through investigating how practitioners select for aesthetic skills in practice. This is done through a practice based study with an emphasis on the aesthetic aspects of selection decisions made *in situ* in various projects from the Danish film industry. The findings suggest that aesthetic judgement played an essential role unfolding in the practices of imagination, intuition and fascination. Furthermore these internal aesthetic judgements were socially shared through a common aesthetic language. These findings contribute to the debate about critical HRM by providing a more nuanced perspective on selection, seeking to close the gap between HRM practitioners and scholars. By adding on the aesthetic dimension it seeks to open up the debate about the intrinsic aesthetic skills and the selection practices required including these in a more holistic scientific-aesthetic perspective.

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Introduction

This study seeks to challenge the way HR professionals and scholars think about HR selection. This is done through an interdisciplinary study that seeks to merge HR selection and aesthetics in order to provide a more fine grained understanding and framework of the informal and often tacit practices that are inherently part of any selection process, despite the attempt to downplay these aspects formally. With the increasing professionalization of HRM practices (Bevort & Poulfelt, 2015) most selection processes have been removed from the CEOs and line managers, who typically have had a more ad hoc and informal approach to HR selection (Heneman et al., 2000), and are now placed in the hands of HR professionals located in either HR departments or external recruitment agencies. This HR professionalization has entailed a pressure to follow standard procedures, best case practices and the use of tests (Iles & Robertson, 1995) based on valid methods in the attempt to legitimize and correspond to the critique of immeasurability of the effect of HRM (Orlitzky & Frenkel, 2005; Wall & Wood, 2005) provided by academics from the psychometric and competency based approaches that are based on rational means.

Despite the illegitimacy of using informal selection practices, practice based studies that look inside the practices of selection decisions show that HR professionals stubbornly emphasize the results from informal interviews when making selection decisions compared to the results coming from the tests, despite research showing that using tests provides more valid results for retention (Highhouse, 2008). To this Klimoski & Jones (2008) critically commented that selection methods should fit to the organizational context including needs, money, time, organizational decision making behavior, which could make intuition based decisions more suitable for some organizations than tests. Practitioners' pretense of performing scientific selection while differing greatly from the actual practices

performed have created a gap between practitioners and academics, making it difficult for a fruitful mutual learning process to take place (Bartunek & Rynes, 2014).

More recently scholars have intended to bridge this gap by questioning if the formalized processes, such as rational and 'one way fits all', test based and 'best-case practice' approaches in selection, actually captures how practitioners work with selection in practice. Bolander & Sandberg (2013) showed that decision makers in practice mutually fitted together their different versions of the candidate in light of temporal meanings of the persons' performance in relation to company standards. These theories imply that HR selection is based on more emotional parameters than scholars have previously assumed, especially in sectors with less professionalized HR practices e.g. in small and medium sized firms (Gavalas, 2012) and in informal industries, such as the tattoo sector, the fashion industry or the film industry (Timming, 2011; Godart & Mears, 2009; Zuckerman et al., 2003). Aesthetics recognizes the fact that we know more than we can verbally express, measure through logically deduced arguments and understand through tests. These non-scientific aspects such as intuition based selection became perceived as illegitimate and unprofessional, and hence most decision makers rationalized their choice after having made the decision based on intuition or 'gut feeling' earlier on in the process (Kreiner, 2012; Lanili & Rosenthal, 1993; Silverman & Jones, 1973, 1976).

HRM scholars' more recent interest in the processes and practices of selection (see, for example, Bolander & Sanberg, 2013) include new aspects of selection that may have a chance to inform HR professionals and vice versa and thereby improving theories that inform new HRM students and existing practitioners by adding a vocabulary that links with their practices by for instance including

emotions (Dowling et al., 2007) or aesthetics that are inevitably always part of any selection process. A few studies have looked into aesthetics in selection despite many professions utilizing aesthetic knowledge and skills e.g. the practice of selecting the right roof stripper by watching people move on the roof (Strati, 2007), how followers use their senses in making assessments of leadership qualities such as charisma and authenticity (Hansen et al., 2007) and how tattoo artists select new staff through aesthetically judging quality and style of the candidate utilizing untraditional selection practices;

“It is arguably impossible to articulate a set of objective criteria for what constitutes “good” art and, indeed, there is no scientific method that can assist owners/managers to this end. The respondents... were, of course, keen to hire artists that offer “tattooing of a high standard,” a “good use of colours”...and good “placement” and “subject matter”...but they were unable to explain precisely what that meant (Timming, 2011: 578).

This paper sets out to show the practices of selecting for aesthetic skills through a multi-case study from the Danish film industry. The film industry provides access for studying the normally hidden aesthetic aspects of selection, because aesthetics are perceived as an essential and natural aspect of work practices and not least in selection (Godart & Mears, 2009). This paper contributes to the HRM literature on selection by critically looking at selection from an aesthetic perspective which provides insights into the processes of selection based on non-discursive “vaguely conceivable” skills. Similar debates about the importance of aesthetics in hiring and how employers utilize the aesthetics of their staff as a source of competitive advantage exist in the literature about aesthetic labour (Warhurst & Nickson, 2007). This literature emphasizes the importance for managing the way employees

feel, look and behave (see, Hochschild, 1983; Warhurst et al., 2000; Macdonald & Sirianni, 1996; Warhurst & Nickson, 2001). These debates were important and opened up debates providing new facets about what it can mean to be ‘skilled’ (Grugulis et al., 2004) that this paper is related to, in centering on emotions and aesthetics at work but also in a distinctive from. Whereas the previous debates center on aesthetic ‘appearance’ such as; “grooming, dress sense, deportment, manner, tone and accent of voice and shape and size of body” (Grugulis et al., 2004: 7), this paper diverts the attention away from appearance towards candidates’ intrinsic ‘aesthetic knowledge’ such as taste and aesthetic expression (Gherardi, 2009). This understanding contributes to the current debate on the selection from a social practice perspective by providing new insights into the alternative practices of selecting for aesthetic skills in practice.

This paper proceeds as follows. First, I provide a literature review guiding the reader through the different dominant perspectives within HR selection, followed by a theoretical background about the aesthetic experience and judgement. Thirdly, I outline the study’s methodology and main features of the Danish film industry as empirical context. Next, I outline various practices of selecting for aesthetic skills through aesthetic experiences and judgement of imagination, intuition and fascination as well as the social aspect of social aesthetic judgement through a shared vocabulary. The paper concludes with contributions that critically debate how aesthetics can inform HR professionals in selection processes and potentially provide a more nuanced perspective on selection and can potentially help closing the gap between HRM practitioners and scholars.

Literature review on HR selection

Traditional HRM selection literature is based on the overall idea that the best candidate for the job should be found through rational and measurable means, and emotions and sense-based knowledge have not been accepted nor recognized as

part of selection practices. The overall target of selection is matching the organizations need for specific well-defined skills to the best fitting applicant, resulting in a so-called match or 'fit' seeking to predict future work performance of the candidate.

First I would like to clarify the concepts and differences between recruitment which is defined as: "practices and activities that organizations undertake to attract quality applicants to an organization" and selection, which is defined as "the process of collecting and evaluating information about an individual or group of individuals in order to extend an offer of employment. Such employment could be either a first position for a new employee or a different position for a current employee. The selection process is performed under legal and environmental constraints and addresses the future interest of the organization of the individual." (Gatewood et al 2010: 3f.). The selection process is part of the broader defined recruitment process that also involves human resource planning; identifying market segments and attracting the right job applicants, but this paper strictly focuses on selection. The standard process used for selection contains with small theoretical variations, the following tasks: firstly, a primary sorting of candidates, based on their CV's and applications, creating a manageable list of relevant candidates to proceed with. Secondly, through valid selection procedures and tools, seeking to get a better understanding of candidates' skills and predicted future job performance, and based on these tests, selecting the few top candidates for the job. Thirdly, proceeding with the few top candidates to other, often more qualitative assessment tools, and finally based on these assessments making a rational choice about the best candidate, who will be offered the job (Holt Larsen 2010).

Within the selection literature four perspectives are identified; the psychometric approach, the competency based approach, the social process approach and the practice based approach.

Within the psychometric approach, coming from psychology, the emphasis is on rational choice, testing, improving validity and reliability in the methods and measurements utilized to select candidates. This approach has, like the rest of society, developed towards increasing rationalization, and as a result overemphasizes the importance of validity and reliability in methods forecasting individuals' job performance (see, for example, Rynes et al., 2002; Lievens et al., 2002; Dudley, Orvis, Lebiecki, & Cortina, 2006; Hogan & Holland, 2003). Later debates within the psychometric approach focus on improving and refining the validity and reliability of tests (see, for example, Hough & Oswald, 2008; Bäckström et al., 2009; Morris et al., 2015) more recently emphasizing avoidance of deception and faking in tests (Schneider & Goffin, 2012; Fell et al., 2016; Feeney & Goffin, 2015; Fine & Pirak, 2015; Lievens, 2015).

The second approach mainly found in the group of management scholars, is the competency based approach that emphasizes the need to better integrate employee resourcing to the business strategy (Thornhill et al., 2000; Orlitzky, 2007). This requires ensuring a fit between the employee and the organization's skills, rather than matching to the specific job (Bowen et al., 2001) In order to do this organizations must perform strategic personnel planning and find a match to the skills, qualifications, attributes and characteristics offered by the various job candidates (see Taylor & Collins, 2000; Millmore, 2003) ensuring that recruiters know the company goals and align those vertically and horizontally when recruiting (see, Phillips & Gully, 2015).

The third approach is the social process approach; it supports the use of tests, however pointing out that invalid tests serve a function of supporting the

establishment of a psychological contract. They suggest, and attempts at rational practices will always be skewed because the information available is limited and manipulated which problematizes the idea of technical rationality (see e.g. Lockyer & Scholarios, 2004; Herriot, 1993), despite an attempt to perform 'realistic recruitment' (see, Wanous 2006). Both the competency based and the social process approach buy into the same key assumptions about selecting for the right fit, as found in the psychometric approach presuming that skills can be measured and matched to predefined needs, goals and values, by utilizing methods such as tests and interviews to measure the candidates.

The fourth practice based approach state the importance of deviation from tests and including the context, by understanding how selection is practiced *in situ*. Arlise Mckinney, Kevin D. Carlson, Ross L. Mechan, et al. (2003) show that more than 50% of decisions were not relying on grade point averages or high test scores. Instead multiple factors influenced recruiters' decision making. As pointed out by Van Vianen (2000), fit assessment is often in practice, based on the impression of the applicants' personality, knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA) more than on formalized tests and measurements. Hence tests are only used to justify decisions already made much earlier in the process (Lanili & Rosenthal, 1993; Silverman & Jones 1973, 1976; Kreiner, 2012). Rynes et al., (2002) through their study of 1000 HR VP's, managers and directors, show that HR practitioners disbelieve or are unaware of essential findings within the psychometric research e.g. the forecasting of job performance through testing personality, integrity and intelligence (Rynes et al., 2002, 2007). In this perspective, emphasis is placed on the gap between tests and ideal processes and how selection is performed in practice (Anderson et al., 2001; Silverman & Jones, 1973, 1976; Bolander & Sandberg, 2007). Some of the debates evolve around themes such as; employees perceptions and the mutual evaluation of employers and job candidates (Ryan & Ployhart, 2000; Diab et al.,

2011), the role of rumor in hiring (Dalal et al., 2015), selecting for emotional compatibility to the job function (Woodruffe 2006), the role of gut feeling in selection processes (Miles & Sadler-Smith, 2014; Highhouse, 2008; Klimoski & Jones, 2008; Kreiner, 2012), how selection decisions are made in practice (Bolander & Sandberg 2013; Lockyer & Scholarios, 2007; Silverman & Jones, 1973, 1976), and how selection practices are embedded in intra-organizational and social context in which selection takes place (Bolander & Sandberg, 2013).

Despite arguments from the psychometric researchers, that this gap has been increasingly closed the last decade with improved test validity and reliability (Bäckström et al 2009), this seems not to be the case (Bolander & Sandberg, 2013). These debates have opened up for new understandings that go beyond and challenge the idea that selection happens as rational processes where employers seek out the best match between skill request and the offer from the pool of various potential job candidates, utilizing the right tests, will provide the results of the best fit to the position open, or to the values of the company (Hollway, 1984; Iles & Salaman, 1995). It's rather a kind of practical knowledge that unfolds in practice, which can be difficult to rationalize and discursively express.

This paper accompanies the latter practice-based literature stream by seeking to understand how it is possible to select for aesthetic skills that are difficult to discursively express and objectively test.

Theory- Aesthetics, Aesthetic Judgement and knowing in practice

Aesthetics derive from the greek word “Aistehtikos” of sensory perception, closely connected to “axiology” the study of values and value judgements. The concept of aesthetics has many ambiguous meanings and scholars have not yet come to a conceptual agreement (Shusterman, 2006). The aesthetic ontology

applied in this paper is that aesthetics are personal and collectively socially constructed at once as it is learned through interpersonal relationships in organizations and in society while it is experienced, understood and judged individually through the senses and taste (Strati 2003: 54). Sensations in this view are experienced through both external impressions (such as hearing, touch, taste, sight and smell) and inner bodily senses (Strati, 2010) that has its own practical knowledge which can be felt as right or wrong but often only vaguely expressed verbally. The fact “that people often know more about what they are doing than what they can formally express, and they know that they know even if they are unable to deduce it using analytical and scientific logic. Hence to express how they work they turn to vague signifiers such as metaphors, vague indefinite or poetic-cum-artistic terminology rather than to analytical explanations” (Strati 2010: 884) such as learning how to play like Boddy Bolden (Gherardi 2009). The epistemological underlying understanding of the aesthetic perspective emphasizes “sense-based data such as intuitions, imagination, fascination and bodily sensations as a basis for knowing and knowledge development” (Strati, 2003).

According to Richard Schusterman (2006) aesthetics have evolved conceptually through three different axes; one juxtaposing aesthetics to the realm of fine art (Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel), a second that connects aesthetics with beauty and the sublime in nature (Emanuel Kant), and a third as sensory perception of the everyday world (Baumgarten, 1998) or an everyday aesthetic way experiencing the world (John Dewey). In this paper I use the broader concept of aesthetics as a way of experiencing the world (Baumgarten, 1998; Dewey, 1934). Following the last of the conceptual axis, linking to the academic work of John Dewey, aesthetics is defined as an intense and special impactful experience that has been felt and lived and perceived through the senses in everyday lives.

Aesthetics are an inherent part of all human existence and everyday lives which implies that aesthetics are inherently part of all human experience of their daily lives and can never be captured or isolated to the realm of the fine arts such as museums or theatres. It is an inherently integrated part of all social practices of everyday lives in which we are embedded e.g. the man on the street experiencing the sounds and sights of the rushing fire engines (Dewey, 1934) or in organizations (Strati, 1996; Guillet de Monthoux, 2004). Internalist theories look at the internal features of the experience in opposition to the external referring to the object experienced. This links to philosophy of science first accepting that aesthetics can never be objectively understood in isolation of one perceptions of the object, whereas the latter believes in disinterestedness where one should accept the aesthetics of an object on its own terms (Stolnitz, 1960, 32–36). Dewey takes the first stance and talks about “interestedness” implying that aesthetics are unique exactly because they don’t serve one specific function and purpose, but instead allows a wide ranging functionality, which includes the life-enhancing pleasures of aesthetic experience. An aesthetic experience is distinct and stands out from the stream of ordinary humdrum experiences we have in every-day life and it is outstanding because of an intensified feeling of affect that appears in this type of experience that is activated with all senses in play, avoiding the separation of observation, action and foresight. It is a state of mind and a stage of knowledge such as intuition, imagination (Dewey, 1934) or fascination.

Intuition takes place when matching of old and new creates a sense of unexpected harmony, like a flash of revelation. It appears as a moment of intensive aha-experience, “like sparks, when poles are adjusted, there is intuition” (Dewey, 1934: 266) and although it seems like a bright abruptness of experience, like a moment of truth, it is based on a slow enduring process of interest below the surface - “Objects as it enters into the experience of the critic by interaction with

his own sensitivity and his knowledge and funded store from past experiences.” (Dewey, 1934: 266).

Imagination is a way of seeing and a stage of knowledge. It implies seeing things as they compose an integral whole, and a transformation from the particular to the universal. It is an image of ‘things-that-might-be’ and a “tapping of a situation’s possibilities,” that at that moment in time is not yet transformed into a ‘shown thing’. In that moment of time, hence imagination is also realizing ‘what is not present’. In order for the idea to transform and be ‘shown’ it takes action, and in the act of trying out the idea, the idea is transformed into a different appearance from the one prior to the action. Imagination, in other words, signifies “the capacity to concretely perceive what is before us in light of what could be” (Dewey in Fessmire, 2003: 65) and can bring to light undisclosed possibilities inherent in the situation at hand. The image created in imagination provides a desire that guides the direction for actions.

Fascination stems from the Latin word *fascinatus*, which is the state of being intensely interested. In line with the understanding aesthetic experience as an intensified feeling of affect (Dewey, 1934) fascination can be understood as a kind of aesthetic experience, linking to the “increase of attention” (Degen, 2012) or “an experience of extreme attention, of absolute and exclusive focus” (Van Imschoot, 2013:159). Maurice Blanchot defines it as intensity of attention further, by describing a state wherein the objective and rational meaning is retracted from our perception of the object and replaced with a sense of passion. Fascination is experienced when the interested glance turns into a stare whereby the person no longer sees the object. Fascination is not in the ‘real object’ or ‘any real form’; it is an image of what used to be there but is not there anymore and is recognized because of its absence. The image contains unlimited and untraceable depth of what lies behind it. When the object gets separated from its meaning it becomes an

image and hence becomes aesthetic deprived from all rational meaning (Van Imscoot, 2013). Fascination has replaced the term interest because being interested does not demonstrate enough passion to live up to the emotional engagements that is required for workers today (Van Imscoot, 2013: 159).

Despite the richness and importance of studying aesthetics experiences, these all emphasize aesthetics from-within limiting it to understand aesthetic experience and judgement from an individual level. Aesthetics are experienced and judged by individuals through the senses, perceived as taste, however it is learned and understood socially through interpersonal relationships in organizations and in society e.g. as part of becoming a practitioner in a specific field (Gherardi, 2009). By supplementing Dewey with Silvia Gherardi's concept of taste: "the sense of what is aesthetically fitting within a community of practitioners- a preference for 'the way we do things around here'" (Gherardi, 2009: 535).

Gherardi's concept 'taste making' illustrates and conceptualizes the role of taste in becoming and being a practitioner. The first step is mobilizing sensible knowledge by first feeling taste, without being able to verbally express it, (this is an individual aesthetic experience), Second is learning to express taste through a shared vocabulary for appraisal, constructed between practitioners allowing them to speak and share aesthetic knowledge collectively through non-rational, emotional, and "evocative expressive modalities, recalling a state of mind by assonance" (Gherardi, 2012). Third, learning how to practice or use the 'right' taste within the community, and fourth refining taste (Gherardi, 2009).

Research context

The Danish film industry is a small but segmented industry, with a surplus supply of qualified freelance film workers, who are hired in on projects when needed (Jones, 2010), yet still loosely connected to the production companies in so-called

‘project networks’ (Manning & Sydow, 2011). People are hired in when needed and matched for project specific- skills instead of company specific skills (Bielby & Bielby, 1999). On many projects entire team constellations from prior movies are hired in, in so-called semi-permanent work relations (Blair, 2003) or project networks (Burt, 2004). Despite these social structures that organize work, unavailability, or desire for renewal and innovative expressions results in new team constellations often being established (Stjerne & Svejenova, 2016; Mathieu & Stjerne, 2012).

In the Danish film industry, recruitment is an informal process with no formal job ads or job applications in the traditional sense. It is based on informal social networks, wherein people get recommended through word of mouth (Blair, 2003; Jones, 1996) which makes reputation essential in selection, which is indicated by the film industry’s well-known saying “you are only as good as your last production” (Blair, 2001). At the Danish Film Institute there is a book and on-line database that includes all names, phone numbers and addresses of all film workers sorted by professions. This also exists on the home page of the Danish Film Institute and International Movie Data Base (IMDB) which makes it easy to track down and contact all film workers in the Danish film industry when needed and as well get an overview of what film projects people have worked on, indicating work experience and with whom they have collaborated, indicating their taste community (Mathieu & Stjerne, 2012) which can vaguely indicate if that person could fit to the project.

A film can be divided into four different stages; pre-production, production, post-production and distribution. Most recruitment and selection is executed within the single project (Baker & Faulkner, 1991:283) by the producers in the first phase during preproduction. At this stage the film travels from being a vast idea and vision to a story line, concretizing further into a manuscript and other visual

materials, encompassing team lists, cast, materials and time plans approximating the production phase. All projects are initiated with an idea, coming from one function belonging to the “creative triangle”, comprised of director, manuscript writer and the producer. The project owner, usually the producer or director, takes initiative to bring onboard the remaining of the creative triangle and later on, as the project develops, the main head functions are brought on board e.g. cinematographer, costume, production designer, and makeup artist. These head functions are essential aesthetic contributors to the final product (Becker, 1982) and consequently essential key players when assembling for aesthetics because they in totality carry the main artistic responsibility in the film production. After the project is granted production money, the head functions on the film often get to select their own sub-team within their department e.g. the cinematographer selects her/his sub-functions.

Practice based methodology and data collection

Data for this paper was collected following a practice based perspective (Gherardi, 2012; Nicolini, 2009b, 2012) with an emphasis on aesthetics (Strati, 1996) and taste (Gherardi, 2012). Observing aesthetics in selection practices is problematic because feelings and sensible knowledge is most often, as previously mentioned, an internal embodied process that only in some contexts have been verbalized through aesthetic judgment. Observing these practices can hence be impossible if they are not verbal. If we as researchers are interested in understanding aesthetic selection then we need to seek out empirical contexts where practitioners have learned aesthetic judgement and created a shared language for aesthetic appraisal (Gherardi, 2009). The Danish film industry is a perfect case for this, as aesthetic judgement has for years been practiced in that context and aesthetics in selection is a recognized and openly debated aspect of the decision about whom to hire and as well whom not to hire. Not all aesthetics selection processes can be observed and

hence these observations were supplemented with informal dinner conversations and unstructured in-depth interviews with key decision-makers from all film projects followed, resulting in 30 interviews conducted with 22 informants.

Conducting a practice based study implies an emphasis on daily working practices that, according to different practice scholars, can never be accounted for through interviews. What people do at work is so much more complex than what they will tell about their work if they were asked (Gherardi, 2012: 14). Therefore, as a minimum, observation studies and even better in depth ethnographies of working practices are the best method to conduct data from *in situ* practices and their complexities (Nicolini, 2012). This processual methodology entails that we as researchers always enter “in the middle of action”, and as a result defining a neatly outlined methodology *a priori*, would be a mistake, instead we need to go there and investigate. I started this investigation about the film industry in 2009 doing research about creative careers in film, interviewing 42 of the most prominent film workers from the Danish film industry. At this point I learned that producers in consultation with the director are the ones that select the head functions of the film. Reentering the field in 2013, I decided to follow different projects within three different film production companies that vary greatly in taste and market segment. The main focus in my ethnographic practice based study was as suggested by Nicolini (2012) and Gherardi (2012), on the senses such as touching, hearing, seeing, tasting, and feeling especially in situations of decision making and selection. This study was conducted with five focal points; aesthetic judgements, materials, temporality and on reproduction vs. renewal of practices. During the study I decided to “zoom out” (Nicolini 2012) from the selection practices within the projects, to look at both the production companies, some social events in the film industry and the Danish Film Institute, who allocate the grants for film ideas that they believe should be produced into a film. Zooming out was important,

because practices can only be studied relationally and should be understood as bundles of other practices and actions that in total agglomerate into a social practice (Schatzki, 2002).

This ethnographic study was carried out in different film production companies, following various film projects in their preproduction stage, where the main selection of the head functions takes place. The duration of this study was from August to November 2013 and reentering one of the production companies' film project during the last part of preproduction from January to February 2014. The main locations of my research took place in the production room and at the lunch table of the production companies and during zooming out, in different film-related sites in Copenhagen.

Findings

This study reveals how aesthetics are incorporated in the practices of human resource selection in the interplay of matching people's aesthetics and visions.

As mentioned, recommendations from social networks provided attention to the potential candidates and can be understood as the broader term recruitment.

Understanding how candidates were selected is a different matter that implies making aesthetic judgements on the different potential candidates. This was done through the below mentioned practices of imagination, intuition and fascination.

The analysis proceeds as following; first part of the analysis provides insight into the practice of imagination that plays an intermediary role between the inputs of possibilities and providing an image that causes an aesthetic experience whereby judgement happens enabling an answer to the selection choice. The second part of the analysis delves into the practices of performing this choice through fascination and intuition. The last part emphasizes the social aspect of aesthetic judgement through the use of a shared aesthetic vocabulary.

Imagination- creating the image

Imagination practices centered on creating an imaginary image combining the vision and the candidate's aesthetic into an abstract whole. This image provides an aesthetic experience and hence aesthetic judgement as the experience inevitably provokes feelings that leads to judgement. Imagination implies envisioning how peoples' tastes would interact with the vision of the project and in that interaction create a unique expression of the filmic product. This imagination practice was expressed in an interview as following:

“... in reality it's all incredible much about taste, and it's about being able to imagine the movie in hindsight before you make it with the director in question inside. How would that film or that product look like filtered through that person..., that's what you have to be able to see... Sometimes you can think that something you read is terribly mundane and boring, but then ahh, okay! With his or her grip added, it becomes something completely different. And that's the art of the collaborations you pick...” (Producer, interview 2013).

If the aesthetics don't fit the project initiator, the team or the interpretation of the vision *in situ*, the candidate would be perceived unfit for the job and be rejected. Most projects experienced difficulties in finding the right candidate exactly because of the aesthetic dimension. Secondly, it involves a practice of communicating aesthetic judgement through a common vocabulary, based on pictures, materials, sketches and references to prior movies, which allow for sharing information about tastes and also “testing people's tastes” and aesthetic interpretations of the filmic vision.

An example of an imaginative selection practice is found in the 2014 -TV series “*Heartless*”. *Heartless* was a project initiated by the executive producer of the

production company who found funding and assembled the team for the project. Unfortunately, only two months before production the director fell ill, leaving the producer urgently seeking a new director. The first director coming to the producer's mind was one who he had a meeting with just two weeks before and felt a good connection to. His experience and expression in personal direction was in the same league as the director who fell ill. Unfortunately, he wasn't available at the time of production. The executive producer asked around in his network and "a lot of people who I trust and who I expressed the vision for pointed towards Natascha and warmly recommended her... I had never seen her movies... And then I met her and got a gut feeling about it." This was the first step, second step which in this case made the final decision outcome was the imagination practice which happens as the manuscript in play was interpreted and communicated through the eyes of that director. There are many ways in which words can be translated into a visible filmic expression.

"... when you read a manuscript you can express yourself a million ways... The way you act from very theatrical to scenes where they don't say a word...(name of the director who got ill) would have made it much more rough and fierce, where Natasha's is more sensitive in her expression".

Performing the choice

Aesthetic judgement provided the answer for the candidate choice was practiced through experiencing either intuition or fascination.

Fascination as selection practice

Talking to different film workers over lunch at Nimbus made me aware that selection is often based on fascination which can be understood as an irrational and inexplicable passion for an object or a person that provides the selection

choice. The feeling of being fascinated can also provide a choice of selection “Taste and fascination are two different things, it’s like standing in the bottom of a sinking ship from the 19th century that’s fascinating!, whereas taste is what guides you and from what angles you shoot the pictures and so on” (Cinematographer, 2014).

Attachments and detachments to collaborations are often due to fascinations, which is stronger than bonds through a shared taste. Fascination is a motivation force wherein fascinated people share a common intensity of passion and motivation. Fascinations connect people to collaborate on the hopefully shared visions. Fascinations can also reveal if people share the same vision, as mostly it will be unbearable for people to diverge from their fascination which is typically in certain aspects and specific versions of the many possible outcomes of the project.

People present ideas and visions for each other on a daily basis and discuss films as small talk in the morning, over lunch etc. As a result many ideas and aesthetics coexist and people work on many different projects in different teams at once. In order to succeed in a very competitive environment you need to initiate many different projects but at the same time these projects and collaboration partners must be chosen carefully, as projects never succeed to become a coherent aesthetic product unless the team has a coherent idea, vision and matching aesthetics, although aesthetics never match fully. As stated in an interview with a producer: “You are always afraid to see wrong, but if you can’t see it then you just can’t see it! And then you can neither feel it, then you can’t do anything for it (be a good partner for the project)” (producer, 2013). Selection for aesthetics is essential although aesthetics cannot be understood as a constant and intrinsic skill. It is learned, developed, refined and even radically changed over time. Aesthetic skills are constantly changing and can never be matched as a permanent solution, but at

least the initial collaboration should seek for an aesthetic match to at least provide the best possible starting point. Sometimes people grow apart despite a strong initiating aesthetic coherence: “The initiating idea can be clear enough and you completely agree... then when the author and you get worked into the material, then some kind of fascination appear, and fascinations can’t be forced and say hey but that one can’t be there, can’t you just turn it off and continue working on this...” (Producer, 2013).

An example wherein fascination played an essential role in the practice of connecting people was in *Antboy I* which is unique as it was a children movie that was seeking to create a unique universe that mixes the American hero genre with Danish realism. The CEO and project entrepreneur bought the book rights and was afterwards looking for the right match in creating the creative triangle, which was difficult because of finding experienced people who could be fascinated by a hero genre children film is unlikely as experienced film workers perceive this as a low status project and the hero genre strongly narrowing down the choice. The project was in deadlock for a long period of time as it seemed to be impossible to select a team. The director Ask Hasselbalch who at the time was working on a low budget horror movie in the same production company saw the project pinned on a board of ‘orphan projects’ and felt an immediate fascination for the project *Antboy* as stated by the producer who sat next to him at the moment of time when he discovered the project.

“I can still remember the day when he (the Director) was sitting in the canteen and looking at this piece of paper and he was sitting like this (wide open eyes and an overly excited facial expression) and then he was just looking at me and said, “It says that it needs a director. Is nobody making

this one?" Then I told him "well, that one, I think you should of course be doing it". "YES! Shouldn't I!"

The producer and director fought to get permission to make the project despite his lack of experience in feature film. The word was spreading in the industry and reached a young manuscript writer who was already fascinated with the hero genre and cartoons. He went to the executives' office and expressed his deep passion for the project by saying; "this was probably the most silly thing I have ever heard of..." (They make a cartoon, and I am not on it! (With a twinkle in the eye)". The executive producer gave him another project at first, as the director already pointed out another manuscript writer as collaboration partner, but at last he was invited in and got on the project, giving up all other project he was working on at that moment in time. Fascinations was a way for individual freelancers to draw attention to themselves and "claim a project" to be theirs, and provided a strongly felt and required passion for the project or a person as an attractor. Fascination is a prerequisite for getting hired on film projects as the project entrepreneurs have invested time, money and emotions in the project and "feel it's their baby they put in others' hands" (Executive producer, 2015) that deserves nothing less than deep passion or fascination.

Fascination is not only attracting people to visions and ideas but operates in connecting people without the intermediary of the vision as people can get fascinated with another person's aesthetic expression. This practice was referred to by one of the producers as "dancing around". This implies collaborations are initiated through the practice of inviting the person to collaborate on a specific idea. This idea might be turned down because of lack of fascination with the project idea. If there is a sense that common ground could be achieved then new project ideas are suggested until a common fascination is found.

Another film Nimbus project (anonymous) provides an example of a case where selection happened as an outcome of the practice of “dancing around” between a producer and a director. The initiating practice within both projects was identifying the other collaborators in the “right” tastes. In this case it was the producer who initiated collaborations, as the producer felt a strong aspiration to a certain director because of his taste and style. As explained by the producer “I met him by coincidence... and the idea was already born in my head, while I was sitting there and talking to him, I was thinking to myself, this guy he needs to make this movie, he doesn’t know that yet but we will figure that out when we have the manuscript...”. (Interview, 2013) As a first step the producer invited the director to make a movie based on book rights of the production company or an idea initiated by the producer. The director turned down the offer but presents his or her own idea, as he was a director of the auteur tradition (Malou Strandvad 2013). The producer realized that the collaboration has to be director driven, and accepted the offer in order to initiate collaboration with the director whose taste he felt a strong aspiration to.

Diverging fascination within a team often results in teams breaking up and the either starting from scratch in finding new team members or ends in deadlock. An example of a practice wherein fascination was essential in the match between people and the vision was in a project that was initiated and never became realized into a film. An idea was born by a director who pitched a project idea for a producer. The producer was very excited about it and was fascinated with one aspect of the idea which was broad and universal and had a visually grandiose dimension and it was new and different, some material never seen before. Then a manuscript writer was invited in by the director, who had his own vision and made his own interpretation of the material in book format. When the producer read sections from the book she realized that the manuscript writer stayed loyal to the

book author and never really lived up to what he earlier on had pitched to the producer. All of a sudden the broadness and grandiose potential of the vision was retracted from the written book chapter and the producer lost interest in the project as she stopped believing that this book could become a film. She told them “I can feel deep inside myself that this, I cannot believe in” As a way to retract attention from herself she retracted her claim of fascination.

Intuition as selection practice

Intuition was described in various interviews as essential for the selection practice; respondents never used the concept but described the aesthetic experience that resulted in the ability to make the choice. In the two projects following it shows the practice of selection through intuition which creates an internal sense of revelation and harmony that provides the answer for the selection choice.

The first case illustrating an intuitive selection practice was the feature film ‘*Satisfaction 1720*’ that was initiated by the producer Lars Bredo Rahbek, who read several biographies about the main character Tordenskjold over an eight week summer holiday, in order to judge the filmic potential of this character. The first step in the process was to select a manuscript writer, who should match the vision. The producer knew a Norwegian manuscript writer, Erlend Loe, from the Danish Film School who had become very successful. He had read some interesting books by him when he was younger and saw an immediate connection between Tordenskjold who had been a Norwegian elephant in a Danish glass shop. Tordenskjold was Norwegian but at the time his career opportunities were in Denmark, Erlend had similar experiences of being a Norwegian playing on others’ turf. The producer on top appreciated having found a Norwegian writer, for political and ethical reasons as Tordenskjold was 100% Norwegian. This process led to what the producer named “mirroring” which implies certain similarities between two objects, making them fit together beautifully. It is a form of intuitive

feeling of things fitting together, which is aesthetic because it provokes a sense of cohesion. It cannot be argued rationally why this sense is right, its intuitively felt, but as Dewey explains it is based on a *longue-duree* interest, in this case an interest in creating the filmic universe, identifying and always openly sensing the environment with this specific interestedness, encountering objects and people that match them, makes an intuitive feeling of cohesion. The associative recruitment practice was a practice where the story provided cues that makes selection simple as associations provide the answer for whom to hire. When the producer was selecting the manuscript writer for the movie ‘*Tordenskjold*’, he came to think of Erlend Loe and the process of mirroring led to an intuitive aesthetic sensation which made it a simple decision to make. The objects that entered into his experience were at this stage the book that associated to new people and ideas. After having found the writer, the director was found years after when the manuscript was much further developed, having made a list of potential directors, the producer sent the manuscript and a cover letter to the first director on the list, who he felt aesthetically “suited the project well” and “could lift the manuscript to new heights... it needs to be a person who can put on the project as their own shirt and make it their outfit” (Producer, interview, 2014). As the project developed further and new associative cues appeared these pointed at other people who were then selected along the project development. This leads to the next aesthetic selection practice which is matching tastes.

The second case, the film project “*Sjit happens*”, is a youth TV comedy series, using an innovative production method engaging with the audience on Facebook as co-writers of the manuscript. The intention was to innovate on the Danish comedy genre, breaking with the existing Danish TV comedy genre. The project was initiated by a producer in the film production company together with the one who became head of the manuscript department. When selecting the core team,

especially the other manuscript writers and directors, it was difficult finding someone available who had both experience and the right taste and style. First of all the project still only existed as a vision (Styhre, 2009) with all its serendipity and suspense, and hence the skills needed were blurry.

“There was nothing that resembled what we wanted to create, and that what existed (within comedy) wasn’t really funny or cool. And...(the few) who had already proven their worth..., we didn’t want to pick because then it becomes the same over again. So we preferred gambling on someone new”. (Producer, interview, 2013)

The producer was looking for someone just one level beneath the famous names that everybody knows and a short list of five experienced and five inexperienced writers was created in order to live up to the coproduction company ZULUs demands. When creating the list she initially started with getting information from the online databases of the DFI and IMDB, however she realized that more relevant information was provided by colleagues recommending candidates, which provided relevant input on the imagination practice leading to the practice of intuition that pointed at the chosen candidate. In the interview she explained that she herself came up with the perfect candidate, who as she explains, had already been on her mind from the very beginning, but because of lack of experience had been “parked” in the line of maybes at the early selection state; “It’s evidently as if a lightning struck... When I later on came to think about him, I then thought, of course its him!... It’s like (a revelation) of course it’s him!”. The producer learned through an interestedness over time, that no other candidate had experience without falling within the category. They ended up hiring two directors, one experienced, who was recommended by ZULU and seemed just right for the job, and the “newcomer” who intuitively seemed right. However his potential couldn’t stand alone, because the investors didn’t have the same insight into the vision and

the market as the producer had at the time, which was solved by creating a shared position. When producing the second season of “*Sjit happens*” the “newcomer” was rehired, while the experienced director had pulled the genre in a too dramatic direction, and hence was not rehired, causing a very delicate and emotional situation. The match between vision and person had to be fulfilled and the search for a new director was initiated.

Shared vocabulary for aesthetic judgement

Through a shared vocabulary for appraisal it was possible to share knowledge of aesthetics in selection. This shared vocabulary was utilized on a daily basis in the organizational work life in the film industry. It stands out as important aspects of selection in two manners; one, in giving candidate recommendations and second, later on in the selection process, used for communication between the job candidate and the producer or director in testing for shared tastes and fascinations in the match.

An example of exploring the aesthetics or taste of the two top candidates from the short list through the use of a shared vocabulary was provided in the selection for a new production designer in the film project, *Antboy II*. In that process the two producers were aware of the taste they were searching for, as they needed someone able to produce within the hero genre. At the end of the selection process, two different production designers were in the loop. They both had been invited to show up for a meeting where the vision was communicated and the director sat down and exchanged references to test for aesthetic match. One of them was very experienced within the genre social realism whereas the other candidate was fairly new and promising within the industry. The latter had made some fantasy universes before which fit well with the aesthetics of the movie. The director made this call as he felt that the references presented by the experienced production designer’s interpretation of the project became too realistic to match

his taste and the vision of the project; “One of the references he used is one that everybody in the industry uses when people don’t really know where to position something, when something falls in between genres and it’s not really clear where it fits in” (Ask, interview, 2014).

This was interpreted as a lack of commitment, vision or common language, as the director thought that the very experienced production designer would be able to come up with more precise interpretations and references for the direction of the movie. The director had a clear vision about a hero genre film with a twist of social realism. Hence the vague reference didn’t provide a common ground or provide any insights to how the candidate interpreted the director’s vision and what aesthetics he would add to the project. The other references to prior movies he used were more in the direction of social realism and didn’t match the vision of the director. As a result he wasn’t selected for the job. This gap was elaborated further in an interview with the producers of the project; “Yes, and it is very far from the direction (Ask, Interview, 2014) wanted to pull it in, so it was very clear that the position of tastes, or the vision for where they wanted to go with this concept was too far from each other“ (Eva, Interview, 2014).

The other less experienced production designer got the job because she managed to interpret the taste of the director in relation to the vision of the *Antboy II* film project and match it to her own taste. She came up with references to other movies that made it clear to the director that she intended in creating a “larger than life universe” that did not fall into the wide spread practice within social realism genre in the Danish film industry. The production designer used references from movies that successfully mix social realism with an adventure universe, especially those that draw on an American larger than life look.

Contribution and discussion

The importance of selecting for aesthetic skills has been largely overlooked by both scholars and practitioners, which is a result of the dominance and spread of science escalating with professionalization of HRM (Bevort & Poulfelt, 2015). The relatively large amount of practitioners who admit to stick with intuition as a selection practice have been largely criticized for ignoring the scientific proof that tests and rational methods create more successful selections (Highhouse, 2008). This could be explained by the fact that intuition provides other insights into aesthetics that cannot and should neither be attempted to verbally explain nor rationalized and made scientific for the mere reason that the aesthetic skills may be overlooked. It is not just a matter of fitting the selection method to the organizational context (Klimoski & Jones, 2008; Bolander & Sandberg, 2013), it is also about understanding the broader spectrum of skills, adding on and understanding the aesthetic skills.

This study provided insight into how it is possible to select for aesthetic skills that are difficult to measure and test through standard selection methods. This study unfolded the practices that allowed for evaluating people's aesthetics, through a practice based study on selection following different film projects through their selection processes. Summing up, the three aesthetic experiences embedded in all selection practices, some might be more dominant than others but they are all part of HR selection for aesthetic skills.

The first 'imaginative practice' implies envisioning and matching people's tastes with the filmic vision. Imagination implies seeing the potential of the envisioned images created by 'tapping into a situation' of many undisclosed possibilities. In selection, this played an essential role as aesthetics transform when added with other aesthetic components, hence imagination of various possible combinations and envisioning the image of a final aesthetic product when seeing a vision through the eyes of a director was essential.

The second ‘intuitive practice’ was used for taking the selection decision. Based on a latent interestedness over time will create a sense of revelation when new encounters meet the old and create the “perfect match.” This practice didn’t allow for much collaboration and was performed by single individual, who got input from their network, pointing at people from the network, creating a list of people and also providing cues that provides answers to the search, ending with an intuitive sense of “of course this one” is the right person for the job. This sense of right fit was even more profound in the cases where more cues pointed in the same direction. Because selection practice based on intuition does not provide a language for knowledge sharing or any logical or rational explanation for the match it is difficult to account for a match for aesthetic skills and legitimize the processes that leads to that match.

The third ‘practice of fascination’ is the strongest felt aesthetic experience that connects or disconnects people and projects. Through the felt fascination with people or visions, people are able to explore and test if there is a common passion, taste, and chemistry in the initiated collaboration. Aesthetic experiences are genuinely and strongly felt when encountered and fascination requires the presence of various aesthetic aspects at once (Dewey, 1934). If there is a mismatch of tastes, preferences for genre, or story telling or edginess of the story, fascination dies and results in separation of collaboration partners. A coinciding of fascination hence automatically implies a common ground based on similar interests e.g. in genres, similar tastes and social chemistry.

The excessive ‘scientification’ of HRM practices in the wake of increasing professionalization of HRM has increased the use of consultants whose legitimacy is highly based on this professional and scientific approach has indeed removed aesthetics from HRM practices and overemphasized the scientific approach. This tendency has created a gap between practitioners and the scientific community and

left HRM “one eyed” and blind to the complex totality with which we experience the world. In order to solve the tension between HRM practitioners and critical HRM studies, Cassierer prescribes that we combine “the eye of science” with “the eye of art” in order to see the world as a totality, avoiding “single eyed” managers and practitioners (Irgens, 2014). Lack of “two eyedness” will result in less rich understandings of the world and less informed judgement e.g. in selection, making it difficult to select the right person for the job. This two eyedness has been provided in the above findings showing how selection for skills, that are not measurable through traditional tests and standard methods in HR selection, is possible through the aesthetic judgement in the practices of imagination, intuition and fascination utilizing a shared language for appraisal for sharing knowledge socially and getting input in form of recommendations or references to films that allow for a deeper understanding of the candidates taste. These practices can inform HR practitioners on possibilities of adding on the “other eye” and create a potential for ‘stereo-opsis’. In collaboration, HR scholars and practitioners can develop methods that imply these aesthetic practices for the selection processes, without falling into the pitfall of creating a ‘one-method-fits-all’ solution. The above findings on aesthetic practices provide a starting point for creating ‘stereo-opsis’ by providing in depth analysis of the practices of aesthetic selection.

Furthermore, these findings show that aesthetic skills cannot be understood through standard methods and procedures which was seen in the case of the movie “*sjit happens*” wherein the junior producers attempted a rational approach by going through the DFI book chronologically, setting up lists and ordering them in different groups. However, none of that informed the choice at the end as it didn’t provide any inputs for the practice of imagination. It needed to be experienced aesthetically through the practice of imagination informed by the recommendations provided by the network and preferably through interpretations

of the vision facilitated through testing for a shared language which implied having a similar taste. Getting more information about the candidate's aesthetics through a shared vocabulary; utilizing references to prior movies, scenes, metaphors, and other material signifiers was the method developed and utilized to test potential job candidates' intrinsic aesthetic skills. These practices produced an aesthetic experience of intuition or fascination that allowed for judgement and selection via either: 1) intuitive associations of things coming together; or 2) fascinations wherein selection happens as attractors or dis-attractors between people and projects, experienced as a deep passion or lack of same for a project or a person's aesthetics.

By adding the social aspect of sharing aesthetics through a shared vocabulary to understanding selection practices this paper provides insight and verbal accounts linked on the practices of selection. This goes beyond the non-verbal and lack of further explanation often found in analysis of selection as intuition and through Dewey's concept it provides an account for recognition that can inform the practitioners of the processes they engage in and the practices they perform when selecting for aesthetics skills. When selecting in teams, selection for aesthetic skills can be difficult as HR practitioners might lack a shared vocabulary to help them share and discuss candidates' aesthetic skills. If the selection is done by one person, intuition or fascination can be performed, which can also explain why this tendency is bigger in small and medium sized firms (Gavalas, 2012) where only one person, often the CEO, selects. The solution could be for HR to create methods that enables aesthetic knowledge-sharing across organizational functions and professional groups. Furthermore the question of diversity should be considered when utilizing this method as aesthetic judgement tends to select for similarity in taste.

Conclusion

This study makes two main contributions, one to critical HRM studies in seeking to close the gap between HR practitioners and scholars by adding an in-depth accounts of the practices of selecting for aesthetics which is the first step in developing “two-eyed” selection practices. In doing this it extends the debate about aesthetic labor as appearance, adding the intrinsic aspects of aesthetics to selection.

Second, by bringing in the social aspect to selection as intrinsic practices of judgement such as intuition (Kreiner 2012) or gut feeling (Miles & Sadler-Smith, 2014; Highhouse, 2008; Klimoski & Jones, 2008; Kreiner, 2012), this study opens up these practices in selection through Dewey’s concept of aesthetic experience and judgement. These in-depth accounts provided insight into the relationship between different aesthetic experiences and show that imagination is a prerequisite for selection decisions in the form of intuition and fascination to take place.

Finally, while not at the center of current research, this study has implications for research on creative and cultural industries, not least providing insights into how careers are shaped as bundles of practices (Schatzki, 2014), and how decisions are made in creative industries adding on to the debate on managing in creative industries (Townley, et al., 2009). Last but not least, this paper contributes to the literature about aesthetics by providing empirical insights and linking the individual aspects of aesthetic judgement with the social aspects through Gherardi’s notion of a shared vocabulary in taste-making (Gherardi, 2009).

Chapter 6: Artistic practices over careers in film⁴

Abstract

This book chapter examines attachment to and release from artistic practices over careers in filmmaking based on various dimensions of the constant negotiations about the created meaning and appropriateness of practices. This is exemplified by learning and establishing a practice of giving feedback in a certain manner or tone. Other examples are learning, establishing esthetic taste, breaking with an existing social practice and establishing a new. Another contribution is the finding that development of taste and craft abilities can get out of sync with one another, as well as the relationship between changing taste/practices and authenticity.

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Introduction

A practice is not recognizable outside of its intersubjectively created meaning, and what makes possible the competent reproduction of a practice over and over again and its refinement while being practiced (or its abandonment) is the constant negotiation of what is thought to be a correct or incorrect way of practicing within the community of practitioners (Gherardi 2009: 536).

Following Gherardi, this chapter examines attachment to and release from artistic practices over the course of careers in filmmaking based on various dimensions of the constant negotiations about the created meaning and appropriateness of practices (also Rouse 2007). To do so we conceptualize artistic practices as situated self-expression in the context of film production. Conceptualizing artistic practices as situated self-expression probably sounds hopelessly pedestrian and trite. But please bear with us over the coming pages, as we believe there is sufficient analytical and heuristic value in this conceptualization to invite you to do what a good film does—temporarily suspend disbelief and then appraise the whole based on its cumulative impact or effect in illuminating the issue treated. The reason for this highly substantial conceptualization is that it allows us to chart contextually contingent shifts in several dimensions that comprise experiences of self-expression over the course of the careers of film workers. This definition of artistic practices is not meant as a universal definition but instead, a proximate analytical device allowing us to track the simultaneous acquisition, use, and negotiation of various types of knowledge or capabilities central to artistic practice.

We treat self-expression as a composite or fusion, differentiating between dimensions that belong primarily under “self” or “expression.” Under self we examine three features: collaboration (basic practices of collaboration), topicality

(what issues or perspectives are deemed important to work with), and basic aesthetic disposition or taste (Gherardi 2009). Under expression we examine forms and skills of delivery—techniques and the use of tools, and tonality. Though nominally instrumental practices, expression can be highly infused with value, as we will see in the empirical discussion below. These dimensions are neither posited to develop in a uni-linear, evolutionary, or deterministic manner, nor deployed or experienced singularly in practice. They are, instead, different dimensions of practice. The reason for analytically separating self from expression and the dimensions that we arrange under them is that they can be in or out of sync with each other, facilitating or inhibiting successful artistic practice. Successful artistic practice in our substantive sense, following Alexander (2004), is the fusion of dimensions of self and expression in practice.

We do not conceive of knowledge of self as deep or truthful, but rather, a resonance with contextual, momentary, situated, embodied knowledge involving multiple sensibilities (Strati 2007) that nonetheless have implications for inclinations towards subsequent settings where various specific practices are more or less likely. Self-knowledge is thus an embodied repository of tacit knowledge and sensibilities, as currently constituted. This moves our conception of authenticity away from those that emphasize connections with tradition (MacIntyre 1985; Peterson 2005) towards Alexander's (2004) cultural pragmatics of social performance, which emphasizes momentary "fusion." In our conception, artistic practice is the resonate fusion of self and expression, and it is this that differentiates it from more mundane occupational practice, which would qualify under weaker conceptions of artistic practice, i.e., practices directly contributing to the production of art works or performances. This distinction between artistic versus mundane occupational practice is well known to our informants and discussed in terms ranging from "authenticity" to "cutting corners"—essentially a

different vocabulary for discussing good and bad (but justified) performance. Against the backdrop of strong expectations of novelty and uniqueness that pervades the film industry, and probably all artistic environments, a cinematographer discusses the “realities” of practice, “Of course you reuse things, but you use them in a different context. You don’t have time to always experiment. And now you have less and less time to experiment. Regrettably. Run on routine, absolutely.” Or in the words of a sound mixer, “I cut corners intentionally in some scenes, you just run through them lightly, also because it gives a dynamic to the scenes where you really give something.” Here we also see clear examples of normative accounts of practice.

Rouse (2002: 161; also 2007) identifies one major strand of practice theory in terms of normative accountability for performances. This accountability can be towards a community, or, as we explore practice change throughout careers, also accountability to oneself, and more proximate constellations. Most sociologists of practice have a place for reflection and accountability. Bourdieu and Giddens have distinctions between practical and discursive or deliberative consciousness, Archer (2003) has the internal conversation, Swidler (1984; 2001) the division between stable and unstable times, and for Garfinkel (1984: 37), borrowing from Schutz, it is the “special motive” and program for interrogating “life as usual.” Our scheme proposes that experiences of artistic practices either remain unproblematic and unproblematized, and roughly the same disposition and incremental refinements or elaborations are brought into the next artistic practice setting, or they can be questioned, which can impact either dispositions towards activities in similar circumstances, or, more radically, actions oriented towards moving into dissimilar arenas and settings than previously engaged with. In other words, either bringing new dispositions into similar settings, or moving into dissimilar settings. This emphasis on the transposition of dispositions does not question the basic tenet of

context—dispositions may ultimately prove to have a strong or weak impact on outcomes, but they enter the mix or mangle (Pickering 1995). Thus, it is not deliberation and the planning of action that produces practice change. Practice is always subject to the vagaries of the social and material factors comprising the context, or in Schatzkian terms “arrangements” in which practice is carried out. As Gherardi (2012: 228) writes, “There is always an ambiguity, and undecidability in practice, as in an open text.” These arrangements or contexts also bear traces of the antecedent practices that lead to the construction, or in the terms we use later, the populating and loading of the contexts where action takes place. Among these antecedent practices are community, group, and individual reflection, be it of a distributed or intimate dialogical nature.

Having defined our treatment of artistic practices, we should also specify what we mean by career. The concept of career has undergone a vast transformation over the past fifty years. For much of the past half century the term career was largely synonymous with what Wilensky (1961: 523) described as the “orderly” career, “a succession of related jobs arranged in a hierarchy of prestige through which persons move in an orderly (more-or-less predictable) sequence.” Current understandings of career, such as “boundaryless” (Arthur/Rousseau 1996) and “protean” (Hall/Mirvis 2006) emphasize volatility and disjuncture, rendering career as more or less a synonym for an individual’s work history. In this chapter we ply a middle ground between, on the one hand, the orderly, progressive conceptions, and on the other, the mere work history conceptions, defining careers as work history within a single branch, and usually within a primary occupation. The focus on career shifts our analytical focus from practices to practitioners, but as Barley reminds us, structural and contextual dimensions have always been central to sociological analyses of careers:

To be sure, careers remained something that only individuals could experience, but they were not solely of the individuals' making. ... Careers, then, were pieced together from the string of alternatives and the set of interpretive resources offered individuals at any point in time by the collectivities to which they belong (Barley 1989: 51).

While being wary of stage models of careers (Gherardi 2012: 227), position or level plays an important role in structuring what opportunities specific individuals have to engage in artistic practice. Focus here is not on what facilitates or causes moves into different positions or levels, but rather, what goes on at these levels or particular sites. As Schatzki (in this volume) notes, sites have their origins, but it is the convergence in time and space that matters, not any given orderly evolutionary progression. The former question regarding vertical mobility and career longevity in the cinematic fields is the subject of a great deal of research (Baker/Faulkner 1991; Faulkner, 1983; Jones, 1996; Zuckerman et al 2003), and as we suggest in the conclusion, a related question merits future attention from a practice perspective. While many careers in film end abruptly, and this fear is something that haunts even the most successful, in order to examine the issue of artistic practices over the course of careers, we have chosen a sample of film workers with rather durable careers, as explained in the methodology section below.

2. Methodology

Studying artistic practices over the course of careers poses some serious methodological challenges. Due to the nature of practices, their contextuality, ephemerality, and no least, the non-verbal/ non-propositional dimensions of practice, observation has been the empirical methodology of choice in practice based studies. The central, classical studies of practice have been related to

detailed ethnographic case studies of practitioners in specific contexts over relatively brief periods of time (Brown/Duguid 1991; Orr 1996; Pickering 1995; Lave/Wenger 1991). These studies usually comprise multiple actors converging in place and time, once or repeatedly, in the presence of the observer. Studying practices over careers observationally is difficult as careers are temporally extended, and would require following multiple individuals across multiple projects over decades. To overcome this challenge we rely primarily upon retrospective accounts from interviewed informants, not real time observation and researcher-driven data accumulation. As Nicolini (2009) argues, interviews, when structured to elicit explicit information about concrete practice and coupled with ethnographic observation can yield satisfactory practice data. In addition to the interview data discussed below, the first author has carried out five months of ethnographic research in on-set/on-location filming. In order to more fully explore the situatedness of practice, in our discussion below we focus on two contexts, one characterized by practice stability across generations and occupational groups, and the other being a particular period of radical changes in practice triangulated from different occupational and generational perspectives.

Interviews about concrete events and practices allow us to investigate what the epistemic-normative strand of practice based studies emphasizes—the “subjective, emotional and provisional character of knowing” (Geiger 2009: 135). In our interviews we get glimmers, but sufficient description, of practices to be able to track changes in the actual contextual practice, as well as great flashes of the subjective experience and meaning of practices. Though no agent can be aware of all factors animating practice, by focusing on work practices and work contexts, the risk of committing the “scholastic fallacy” (Bourdieu 1998: 132; i.e., asking respondents to be sociologists), is minimized as the interviews focus on activities that the informants are familiar with, as well as having occupational sensitivities to

detail, and for many, sensitivity to sensitivities as that is what their work entails. As one director puts it “my department is emotions” creating them in the audience, capturing them on film, but also, as a central occupational tools, creating and managing them on-set, among the cast and crew to get the production to function.

The empirical data for this chapter consists of two interview-based studies of Danish film workers as well as a total of five months of ethnographic observation of the principal photography (shooting) phases of three film projects and some of the pre-production phase of one of the films. The first interview study used here contains a sample of forty-one film workers with “durable” or “successful” careers in feature film production in the occupations of sound mixer, producer, editor, director, and cinematographer. Though varying to accommodate the temporal employment/work rhythms of the various occupations, durable careers in film were defined by working regularly (which for directors is a film approximately every third year, for a cinematographer at least two films a year), and having worked on at least two commercially or artistically significant feature films over a six year cycle. The second interview study comprises thirty-four graduates from three cohorts from the National Film School of Denmark (one each from the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s). The occupations covered in this study are directors, producers, sound mixers, and cinematographers. Of the thirty-four in this study, eight individuals would qualify as having durable careers as outlined above. One person was interviewed in both studies giving seventy-four unique individuals. In both studies, open-ended career history interviews were carried out lasting one and a half to four and a half hours. The interviews focused on entry into the branch, career ambitions, formative events, skill and knowledge acquisition, and collaboration patterns. The cohort interviews also focused explicitly on experiences at the National Film School of Denmark.

3. Film industry idiosyncrasies

Several characteristics of film production have important bearing on the issues discussed in this chapter. First, most film production takes place within temporary project-based organizations. This means that there is a need for standardization across the branch or community, even internationally, to make assembling a production project viable in a short period of time (Meyerson et al. 1996). Second, and in part related to their project-based nature, film projects are highly hierarchic—with strong and relatively standardized hierarchies between and within “departments.” Film production is also highly divisionalized, or divided into departments that have specific roles in the production process. The main departments relevant in this chapter are: production, headed by the producer(s); the directorial department headed by the director; the camera department headed by the cinematographer/director of photography; the sound department, headed by the sound mixer; and the editorial department, headed by the editor. Film production is also generally divided into three phases: pre-production, production (principal photography or shooting), and post-production (which includes editing). Some occupations transcend these phases, some reside within one. Producers and directors span all three, cinematographers only in the production phase, editors in the post-production phase. However, editors frequently begin editing during the production phase (sometimes working on material shot the same day) and continue until after the production stage is completed.

Film production is both highly complex, and highly collaborative with strong mutual dependencies. Thus, in filmmaking, artistic practices are invariably collaborative, that is to say, they are not just carried out in communities of practices, but also in teams that are integrated both vertically and horizontally, at least at the top. Collaboration is thus both inter- and intra-occupational and

opportunities for making various contributions to the film are highly structured and stratified.

Finally, the vast majority of the cast and crew on film projects work on a freelance basis. The combination of project organization and freelance work leads to what has been termed “tournament careers” (Stoyanova/Grugulis 2012), where each employment opportunity is a “prize” open to competition where the sole reward is the right to work on that specific project. While not on a labor market, producers and some directors, the primary “project makers,” are also subject to market vagaries in terms of getting their projects funded.

The Danish film industry also has some idiosyncrasies. Two institutions play central roles in the Danish film field—the National Film School of Denmark (NFSD), which features in one of the following discussions, and the Danish Film Institute. The NFSD is not the only film school in Denmark, but it is the film school, enjoying a hegemonic place in the Danish film industry over the past thirty years, and therefore it merits discussion in this context. The NFSD sees itself as an art academy rather than a technical or trade school. This is true for all the occupational programs they teach—not just that for directors. The language of instruction is Danish, which restricts the pool of applicants to persons who master a Scandinavian language. The school is also characterized by elite standing and intimacy, often with over a hundred applicants for each of the six places in the five occupational programs (producer, director, sound mixer, cinematographer, and editor) in the film department available every second year. Screenwriting is taught in a separate two year program, and there is some collaboration between students on these programs. All students in the five occupational programs have common courses in dramaturgy, cinematurgy, and film history, with the bulk of time being spent on practical filmmaking exercises and more coherent projects involving all occupational categories with different constellations of students. The course of

study at the NFSD is highly intimate, intense, practical, and extensive—comprising four years of full-time study. Some of the implications of this are discussed below.

The second central institution in the Danish film field is the Danish Film Institute, which has a broad mandate to promote Danish film nationally and internationally, but is most significant due to its role in administering a comparatively generous, well-functioning system of subsidies for development, production, and distribution. This centrality is attested to by the fact that the vast majority of feature films released in Denmark have received subsidies from the DFI. This subsidy system leads to a high and stable volume of feature film production (about twenty-five per year) and employment for a minor film industry (Hjort/Petrie 2007). Danish film has been successful in taking a comparatively large portion of the national box office (about 25 percent) and proportionate to its size wins many prizes and awards (DFI 2012: 7).

4. Artistic practices over the course of careers in film

Authoritative positions and authorial opportunities

This section first looks at practice settings and how the stratification within these impact practical knowledge over the course of careers by creating different types of practice opportunities for different individuals, focusing on “authorial practices.” We then go on to examine the change in and stability of practice in relation to two specific contexts—the National Film School of Denmark, and a series of projects headed by the director Lars von Trier. We end by looking at some retrospective accounts of changes in practice over the course of careers with

explicit reference to the self-expression scheme introduced earlier and conceptualization of “authenticity.”

The combination of the hierarchical nature and formally standardized roles (both of which are practiced conventions) in filmmaking creates a series of positions affording rather specific opportunities for artistic practicing—in this case, making various types of contributions to filmmaking. As careers in filmmaking usually begin with menial jobs, we briefly look at practice at this level—what we call “non-authoritative positions”—before concentrating on positions affording vast opportunities for artistic practice; what we call “authoritative positions” (usually synonymous with being a head of department). We underline that when we use the terms authority and authorship, it is in the sense of social and self-attribution of authorial or authoritative status and responsibility, and not that individual agency causes the effects that are ascribed to authors or holders of authoritative positions. Authoritative positions are those where authority over others within one’s department is exercised or at least attributed; where artistic authority is accorded in the form of being the highest ranking occupational specialist present in a setting. This accords an “authorial” mandate and responsibility to produce comprehensive suggestions and actions based on the particular occupational domain of knowledge. Authoritative positions are available both in the industry itself, as well as at film school, where departmental responsibility is afforded in student film projects. The significant difference between authoritative and non-authoritative positions is that non-authoritative positions only allow one to participate in the creation and criticism of the products, performances, and suggestions attributed to others, while in authoritative positions, it is one’s own (directly—i.e., from one’s hand or mouth, or indirectly by being responsible for the actions of others) products, performances, and suggestions that are the subject of one’s actions and the contributions and evaluations of others. Certain authorial

opportunities are available to those in non-authoritative positions, but these have to do with authoring commentaries on the works of others.

Shooting a film is, in general, a fairly visible and transparent process for those on set or location. Menial jobs, where most cinematic careers begin, afford observational and experiential opportunities, and an intensive schooling in the basic social norms, codes, conventions, and practices in film production (Bechky 2006). One has the opportunity to observe the functions of various departments and positions, allowing new entrants to see the various expressive opportunities generally afforded in each department and familiarize oneself with the social and technical/material context unique to that department. Aside from providing observational and practical experience in the workings of specific departments with their specific expressive opportunities, presence on set allows one to develop one's cinematic self in several ways. The most encompassing dimension is being a participatory member of the film production community, sharing in the emotional energy (Collins 2004) and moral force generated by the ritual of filming (Alexander 2004). In addition to this general process of inclusion in the film production community, there are also opportunities to generate authorial positions, contributing to a cinematic self in terms of learning and practicing taste (Gherardi 2009). At this level both our informants and ethnographic observations reveal a high degree of "purposive consumption" of film and a practicing of taste by discussing and critiquing film. This involves learning with whom one should engage in such discussions, how to perform such conversations in terms of language and argument formulation and deference, as well as what tastes are appropriate to discuss or divulge in which circles. This entails "authorial practice" as one is attaching a dimension of self to a public statement and is held accountable for an opinion. In addition to commenting on film, authorship of opinions about the activities going on in different departments, or most generally,

the performances of actors, is a recurrent feature during the production phase of a film. While these discussions almost never impact the course of the actual filming they are important in a practice sense in that they school both the form and content of taste and criticism, albeit from a relative outsider position.

As one moves up within the ranks in specific departments, tasks become more specialized and sophisticated and more apprenticeship-like relations can develop, especially in what Blair (2003) terms “semi-permanent work groups” that move together across projects. This offers more opportunity to make technical enquiries about effects, learning the craft or technical skills, as well as participation in aesthetic discussions—not just how to produce effects, but which effects to produce and why. Advancing to an assistant level usually entails gradually assuming authorial control for part of the process, but not authoritative responsibility. This may also involve some contact between departments but not authoritative contact. Though this experience is formatively important for developing a nascent expressive repertoire, it is discounted as not very artistic by those higher up in the hierarchy as expressed by an editor, “You can surely roll around in the film industry ... where you just help out with some practical things and comment on how the actors are acting and things like that.” Thus, what takes place in non-authoritative positions is that one enters the practice community of filmmaking, one becomes a practitioner, but not a practitioner of artistic practices. For this one has to ascend to an authoritative position.

The National Film School of Denmark and durable practice

In terms of our investigation of artistic practice, the NFSD is significant as a site of practice and practice formation as it usually affords its students their first opportunity to move into authoritative positions, allowing them full opportunities

for self-expression as responsible creators in film projects. With the decline of the studio-based apprentice system in the 1970s, the NFSD became the central educational and training forum for film workers in Denmark. Due to its elite, intimate, and lengthy course of study, as a particular site of practice the habits, routines, knowledge, and dispositions trained into individual students are largely reproduced in the Danish film industry. Through the fact that many of the basic approaches, ideologies, and pedagogical practices have been fairly stable over decades, an intergenerational commonality has been established. In our interviews, four things were regularly identified by graduates of the NFSD as the fundamental outcomes of their time at the school: a common language, tone, framework of reference, and the mandate to develop a unique standpoint or profile; the latter of which is rooted in the self-image of the film school as an art academy rather than a trade or technical school. In the following, we will concentrate on the common “tone,” and the common language.

What was meant by tone is not an artistic tone, but a manner of criticizing work, or practicing “appraisal” (see Schatzki, chapter 3 in this volume). Aside from courses in film history, cinematurgy, and dramaturgy, most of the program comprises making short films or film fragments and then discussing them at screenings. It is here that the “tone” is practiced and becomes embodied, sometimes via personal trauma. The quality of the tone is invariably described as very hard and forthright. A cinematographer stated “those evaluations were so hard that people cried. It was total devastation, people were crying in the corridors—it was terrible.” A director’s comments were typical of former students’ assessment of the process, “The film school is built upon the devise of picking the student apart and building them up again.” Though questioned by some former students, despite its brutality this practice is widely accepted for a number of reasons; primarily, because it is a known and anticipated practice both

at the NFSD and in the Danish film industry, and because it has become associated with or justified via the success of Danish film. A producer comments that this common “way of giving and receiving feedback ... is good because that is how it’s done on the other side [in the industry].”

Over four years of active participation in the process, as both givers and receivers of critique, getting pulled apart and put back together, the students at the NFSD become deft practitioners of this tone. This practical familiarity and ability to both give and receive forthright and hard criticism is buttressed by the justification that it is best to get one’s crying over at the film school, so that doesn’t take place within the industry. A producer related the following story:

“On film X we had a consulting editor who was trained at the NFSD. And he came out to a showing of an early version of the film and he was livid— ‘it’s insane that you haven’t move further in the past two months, now it’s worse than last time I saw it, this film will never make it into release’—very specifically addressed to the editor who was sitting in the room, who wasn’t trained at the NFSD but in England [but Danish] and [the editor] cried for three days.”

This is an example of the very harsh practice being deployed in a context where not all participants are initiated in it, which makes the practice stand out. Another producer praises this practice for its uniqueness to the Danish film industry, its broad application, and the willingness to bring competitors into such evaluation situations:

“[W]e have a really fantastic thing [in the Danish film industry, which the producer compares to Sweden]. When we have a first screening we invite in film friends, it can be some directors from your graduating class, ... or an editor that one has worked with, so you get second

opinions from people who were not part of the making process ... you become so blind as it takes such a long time [to make a film], so that element of competition [between people in the film industry] that I was telling you about earlier— disappears.”

Two features of this practice were also frequently commented upon by our informants. The first is that as this practice is employed in contexts where all five occupational groups are assembled; there is also not just an acceptance but an expectation of commentary and criticism from all heads of department on issues of mutual interest. The second is that critique isn't just saved for special evaluative occasions, but made during the production process itself. A director who has worked in England hit on both of these issues in lamenting the lack of input from British colleagues during the production process: “Here [in Denmark] everyone feels they have a right to say their opinion ... in England it all comes out at the going away party. And there are some really clever people in England—why didn't you say anything?” This exemplifies Gherardi's (2012: 226, original italics) contention that “Judgments on the correctness or otherwise of the practice are not external to its practicing but are formed within the action and are not only sustained by practice but constitute it” In other words, the judgment—or actual appraisal—is made in practice (or observation) and it can either remain mute and unarticulated or become articulated just after the performance of the practice and be part of a negotiation process, or as lamented above, long after, at a point at which the appraisal cannot affect the production itself, but be remembered for future consideration.

Aside from the tone that is learned by practice in these sessions, the oft-alluded to common language is also developed via these screening and discussion sessions. The following comments, one from a producer and the other from an editor, bear witness to Schatzki's (in this volume) assertion about the practical dimension of

“sayings,” as what is implied in the following quotes is that if the common language acquired at the NFSD is not shared, the conversation moves from the level of practice to a more deliberate or discursive level. Or as the editor puts it, the language has to be established from scratch. Also worth noting is the implied infrequency with which the producer and editor work with persons who do not share this common language. First, the producer,

“I once had a film where there was someone who didn’t come from that world—the NFSD—and it was strongly apparent. ... I could really feel that our dialogue went slower ... the language and ways of tackling things ... for example when you critique work.”

The editor,

“I see that the times that I work with people who haven’t gone there [NFSD] that one has to establish a language with them from scratch. And you find out that things that are taken for given by those who attended the film school are not taken for given by others.”

These durable practices are firmly entrenched in the bodies of the vast majority of filmmakers in authoritative positions in the Danish film industry and the contextual settings of the NFSD and the Industry, and applicable to novice and master alike. The cinematic language, tone, and inclusion across occupational lines in evaluative practice operate simultaneously and reinforce each other. The common language is not just an abstract vocabulary comprised of standard definitions, but a living language acquired and deployed through the on-going, four-year discussion that takes place in film history, theory, and cinematic dramaturgy courses, film production exercises, as well as the sessions where student films are, as outlined above, comprehensively criticized, and then reproduced in the industry setting. When the practice of standardized sayings, both

in terms of language and tone, is disrupted by practitioners not capable of the seamless doings and sayings initially learned and practiced at the NFSD, the need to start from the beginning, or jump from the level of practical to discursive consciousness is created (Giddens 1979; Mathieu 2009).

The run-up to *Dogme*

The second example we take demonstrates both practice change and durability. One of the most radical changes in the aesthetics and techniques of making film in Denmark, and a movement that spread from Denmark worldwide, is summed up as the *Dogme 95* movement. Like most aesthetic revolutions, there are a number of antecedents in the run-up to the public launch and formalization of the techniques, perspectives, and ideas that fed into the movement. Significant among these are the projects of the director Lars von Trier in the late 1980s and early 1990s where several of these techniques and perspectives were first practiced. One of the values of looking at periods of significant change is that the challenges to embodied practice become evident.

Early in his career, in the late 1980s, von Trier hired a cinematographer who had worked with the iconic director of the previous “Golden Era” of Danish cinema, Carl Theodor Dreyer, as von Trier was a great admirer of Dreyer. This action and the reverence von Trier expressed for Dreyer led the cinematographer to believe that it was the aesthetic effect and style that the cinematographer and Dreyer had produced together that von Trier, via his choice of cinematographer, wanted for his film. In an interview this cinematographer related the profound conflict that arose between himself and von Trier over lighting and shooting. Two fundamentally different perspectives on and practices in filmmaking clashed. On the one hand, the classical perspective embodied in the cinematographer

emphasized the composition of shots based on aesthetic beauty and visually revealing the state of mind of the subjects. Each shot was to be both a study and aesthetically accomplished, where lighting, angle, and composition were judiciously weighed. Von Trier, in keeping with the new approach to film at the time in Denmark, valued storytelling higher than the aesthetics of single shots or scenes and the canonical practices of the previous era. The cinematographer relates a strong conflict with von Trier in the filming of a scene where von Trier did not want any light on the main actor, which the cinematographer found abhorrent.

“I was influenced by Dreyer, you should be able to know the person who is being filmed. ... [H]ow often do you see someone just standing there without any light on them, just standing in a dark room? That is just the opposite of Dreyer, because when you zoom in on someone you should see their facial expression, so here one would like to put light on the eyes. A lot can be expressed with the eyes so the rest could well be dark. You want to draw a picture and strengthen the expression of the role that is being played. ... So it ended up that we shot the scene twice, once like he wanted it and once like I wanted. Afterwards he apologized to me. Not lighting a person, Dreyer would never have said that. ... I want the same freedom as the director. It is my freedom to light subjects as I believe they should be lit.”

In describing his discomfort with what von Trier asked him to do, the cinematographer described it as occupationally “unnatural” for him, as well as a betrayal of his cinematic mentor, and the apology received was taken as vindication of his perspective and practice. Both persisted in their established practice—the cinematographer in lighting his subjects, and Trier using shadow figures. Also worthy of note is the fact that the cinematographer only discusses

what transpired on-set, he does not mention which take, if either, made it into the final version of the film. What this story tells us is that despite the hierarchical structure of filmmaking, where the director has ultimate artistic/creative responsibility and authority for the film, heads of department do not just carry out orders, but also invoke their personal and occupational conduct, perspectives, and judgments (“it is my freedom to light subjects as I believe they should be lit”), even when working with “the next Dreyer” or acclaimed genius in the national film industry. It also displays the contexts or sites of engagement between the heads of various departments. The cinematographer is concerned with the activities he is involved in on-set. Vindication for his practice is restricted to the direct filming process—not what happens between then and the final cut of the film, where the influence of the cinematographer is, in general, nil. Taking the shot both ways, as we will see again below, becomes a way of dealing with impeded practice, understood as a practice which arouses enough conflict that the “dance” (Gherardi/Poggio 2001) is disrupted. Here we see an example of two tides or practices meeting; the cinematographer had a career-long use of his practice—which was supported (i.e. not challenged) within the wider community of practice during the period in which he was professionally active, and his practice is morally infused by the training and practice with an esteemed mentor. Trier, on the other hand, was experimenting with new expressive techniques abandoning established practice.

For a subsequent project, another cinematographer interviewed stated that he was hired explicitly “because Trier was looking for a younger cinematographer,” possibly due to the physical demands of the up-coming project, possibly due to the likelihood of encountering less resistance to his, at this point still, radical filming style. The new cinematographer described work on the project in this manner:

“It didn’t resemble anything else at that point, how we filmed, it was unexplored territory ... handheld ... we just set a basic lighting and then we just filmed ... we filmed all the time [without resetting the lighting] ... it was really fun and it was another type of tool that was added to my toolkit.”

As we see here, Trier retained the practice of paying scant attention to lighting, setting the lighting for a scene just once, or as enshrined subsequently in the *Dogme* rules, using only the natural lighting found on a location. For this cinematographer, working with Trier was just as revolutionary as for the former cinematographer, but the reaction was quite different, it was described as fun, as being part of a coming wave, going against something that was neither set in a personal style nor supported or condemned by the wider environment.

As remarked by many, the early period in one’s career is often characterized by an openness (phrased in agency terms) towards various expressive forms and experimentation and learning, but, what is significant, is moving into or being shifted into settings by the necessity of taking available possibilities, in which various expressive techniques are practiced. In other words, early career eclecticism can be a function of being thrown into a variety of contexts where different expressive practices are likely. The fact that the younger cinematographer describes the technique as just another tool in a toolkit contrasts with the reverence—and rigid adherence—the older cinematographer attached to his practice. A further contrast can be made with a third cinematographer who essentially used the same technique as the younger cinematographer, as this technique swept across the Danish film industry. This cinematographer rigidly adhered to the practice not due to reverence for its origins or associations or where he had learned it, but because of his bodily experience in using it compared to conventional mounted camera techniques:

“You do what you feel is good. And I have chosen a direction with mostly handheld camera. I have made films that are not [done with handheld] and I have been bored out of my mind. So it is important for me to keep hold of this and refine it rather than saying, “ok now I have done that” and now I want to try something else.”

The adherence of the first cinematographer does not seem entirely explainable in generational terms. An editor not part of the *Dogme* movement, with a solid footing in the previous generation of filmmakers and a long-term collaboration with a central director of the pre-*Dogme* era of Danish film comments:

“Good development and great diversity in the industry, dare to do a lot—thanks to Lars von Trier—previously it was heavy and plodding to make film. *Dogme* puts the focus on the story rather than it is supposed to be fine and beautiful. The living camera. Development and rejuvenation of film.”

A cinematographer younger than the editor quoted above contests the whole *Dogme* aesthetics as good practice “if there is something I don’t like it is *Dogme* ... It has nothing to do with photography ... it just looks horrible ... you just cannot stand seeing it, its just so ugly.” Here we see two different metrics employed to evaluate a practice. This cinematographer uses a metric of visual aesthetic perception to reject a practice, whereas one of the cinematographers quoted above uses a metric of bodily experience during the filming process to embrace and retain the handheld camera practice and reject the mounted one, and the editor quoted above to conceptions of rejuvenation and vitality.

The novelty of the filming process had a ripple effect on the editing process. An editor states that previously she edited “intuitively,” but with Trier:

“[I]t was incredibly fun and an incredible shift for me because it was a so different from what I had learned the four previous years [at NFSD]. . . . It was liberating for me because at film school I had learned about continuity and cinematic rules about how to tell stories in film, what one clipped together and how one filmed over time. And that was broken up and they filmed everything they were able to, whole long scenes with lots of actors at a time. And we had a rule [von Trier and the editor] that if there was something we didn’t think was exciting we just cut it out and we began to work with discontinuity and jump-cuts and a more montage-inspired way of telling the story. And this is something that Lars and I have worked with since and developed, we develop ourselves together. At the beginning it was really demonstrative and something that should be evident and now it’s more a way to see how well the audience is following the story and creating the coherence. It’s about getting people engaged.”

Because the new aesthetic made intuitive editing difficult, a new collaborative practice was spawned. The editor stated that things had to be tried out, they had to sit next to each other and experiment and see things. They established an understanding that nothing was “too stupid” to try, and that if one suggested something they would try it and view it with an open mind. In essence, a deliberative, experimental practice arose, where different alternatives needed to be tested, seen, and judged against each other. As the editor states above, the expressive style becomes a proximate practice between herself and Trier. However, the collaborative practice—the deliberative, open to any suggestion and “let’s try it” practice—becomes something taken into all other relationships between the editor and other collaboration partners, “And I also think that one of the reasons people want to work with me is that things don’t end up in conflicts;

you shouldn't sit there and discuss things to death, you should just try it, do it." In this case the expressive practice becomes durable within the dyadic relationship, but not necessarily outside it, the self-dimension—the collaborative practice, becomes durable with this editor in all working relationships.

Broadening and narrowing, refining and redefining, losing it, and losing interest

Those who work regularly as the heads of departments, as directors, cinematographers, editors, and sound mixers discuss their careers in non-linear terms, with "progress" along the various dimensions subsumed under self-expression moving at various rates and even in different directions for various reasons. One director explains what in essence is a loss of practical capacity as a result of failures:

"I have done things that I had become a worse director from having done. ... Worse because you have your intuition destroyed. Sometimes you learn a lot from fiascos, almost more, sometimes you become a better director because of them, and in some respects you become a better director every time you make something, but you can also have your self-confidence destroyed to the point where you are worse at making decisions, you become less sure of your own intuitive choices, you play too safely, use your work time in the wrong manner, or become so ambitious that you cannot meet, artistically, the ambitions one has. That one's taste is better than one's craft abilities."

What is described here is a profound and involuntary destabilization affecting self and expression as a result of previous actions. This loss of practical ability is described in terms of mind overruling body, with negative consequences.

Among our respondents we also hear of cases where such radical destabilization is sought. Several informants took up the issue of “reinventing oneself” as a desirable project, in part to remain visible and artistically vital in the branch. One of the most prominent editors in the Danish film industry described this process as entailing voluntary “de-familiarization”—establishing a new partnership, in his case working over generational lines with a new director approximately thirty years his junior, and changing genres. The reinvention process entails intensive and close collaboration between the editor and director in order to “learn what each other likes” and “establish a common language” again. In other words, the initial steps in the reinvention process are deliberative, contextualized discussion. It is the establishment of a new shared corporeal knowledge that becomes intuitive over time, so that “now he [the director] is almost never here, as we have found a language together. I clip long scenes and we have a single consultation before the final two intensive weeks where we take the big decisions together.” Here again we see a shift between deliberate and intuitive work processes.

A cinematographer expressed skepticism about the possibility and wisdom of embarking on such a reinvention project,

“[Y]ou have to do what you like yourself and what is right for you. It is like being a good painter. They also paint one way, but they become possessed by it and keep hold of it. ... I don’t think you can reinvent yourself all the time. I think you do the same thing each time, but you should refine it each time. You see with lots of filmmakers that there are a few basic themes one is interested in and all the films are the same but they are still different. ... You shouldn’t adapt thinking ‘oh, this or that is in fashion.’ Then it becomes superficial and one is not oneself. That gets seen through real fast. It has to be authentic and come from inside you, otherwise one cannot stand there in a situation

and make an instantaneous decision that it should be this way or another. You have to trust your intuition and you can only do so if you can totally stand behind it.”

What is expressed here may also reflect the exigencies of the occupational contexts that editors versus cinematographers work under. An editor described the editing room as a place for “depth and reflection” while a cinematographer described his role as “the cinematographer is the practical work leader for everything that takes time, and the crew gets paid overtime” and therefore it is decisive in this role to be able to make the instantaneous intuitive decisions alluded to above. In other words, a working cinematographer doesn’t have the liberty of deep reflection or “learning a new language on set” and a reinvention process for a cinematographer would need to accommodate such practical demands.

While not an example of reinventing oneself, a director describes abandoning a successful practice regime out of boredom and an interest in participating in something that is felt to be more relevant or authentic at the moment.

“That voice that I retrospectively can see that I have, the films that have been best have a combination of some humor and psychology, and defining that has taken me a long time, and now that I have defined it one can see that I get jobs because they want someone who can do that, so much so that they will even fetch someone from Denmark to England to deliver that tone. Then I personally somehow lost interest in it and I don’t want to repeat it... I am becoming tired of it ... You know, ‘two people meet dropping papers in a bar and look each other in the eyes’ ... I cannot stand it anymore. So I want to move on, so I have to go out and do something else to demonstrate that I am not just a craftsman who can deliver that, but also something heavy,

but that also has to do with the fact that I also have an interest in the world.”

What characterizes these departures and performance of new alternative practices chronicled above is the link between practice change and moving onto different types of projects. Film production is both highly collaborative and hierarchic. As explored early in this section, the position in a project profoundly impacts what one has the opportunity to create or comment on, and the type of project one works on also sets parameters for activity. As explored late in this section, all film workers, even directors, are dependent upon broader projects to practice art, and changing artistic practices in most cases requires radically different project parameters in terms of genres, collaboration partners, and collaboration styles, corroborating Gherardi's (2012: 220) contention that radical innovations may require new communities. What then moves more squarely onto the agenda for understanding changes in artistic practice is understanding the practices and practice settings that impact how projects and the sites where artistic practice takes place become “populated” with persons and resources. In other words, we need to understand from a practice perspective how the sites where artistic practice takes place become loaded, or in Schatzki's (in this volume) terms how what converges in time and space in a site gets there; we need to understand how some people, and things get bundled rather than others.

Finally, for those not content with the story of non-linearity and indeterminacy, there is one aspect of practical knowledge that does appear to develop over time. Paradoxically it is also the most contingent and contextual aspect—a sense for contextual adaptation both with regard to expression and collaboration, which was reported across occupations. The embodied, intuitive knowledge that was reported to develop linearly with experience (unless one experiences a failure-based crisis as the director above) is a sense what is appropriate for the situation. As one editor

puts it, “the more experienced you are the less need there is to press things forward, everything goes easier.” One possible explanation for this is that collaboration and mutual adjustment is a central aspect of virtually all activity in filmmaking, artistic as well as non-artistic practices. In other words, it is a generic practice that is constantly in use. What is paradoxical is that this sense for situational adaptability and ensemble playing operates in a context of continuously new projects and new collaborative constellations. If we return to our formulation of artistic practices as situated self-expression, it seems that it is the sense for situation that strengthens most with experience in the highly collaborative world of filmmaking. To again invoke Gherardi/Poggio’s (2001) dance metaphor, film workers become better dancers, regardless of the genre or partner.

5. Conclusion

In this chapter we have examined the acquisition, refinement, and abandonment of practices over the course of careers. We have found little evidence of any linear development of practice, with practice change occurring for various reasons during careers. However, as discussed directly above there is a reported tendency to increasingly develop a sense for contextual appropriateness in practice that includes both aspects of self, especially in terms of collaboration, and expression. This entails reading both projects and situations better and increased capacity for producing intuitively appropriate conduct that is both contextually appropriate and experienced as artistic practice. If we have to single out one practice that characterizes advanced careers, it appears to be becoming a better, more intuitive ensemble player and being able to plough more of one’s self, person and humanity into one’s artistic contributions. This has implications for our conception of authenticity, developed in reference to Alexander (2004). Authenticity is not singular—e.g., finding oneself or one’s core is not a matter of doing exclusively

one thing; authenticity is polymorphic but resonant in a singular fashion at a given point in time. Likewise, especially in the highly collaborative context of film production, authenticity is not achieved through autonomy, but rather through integration. One can thus speak of a twofold fusion, of self and expression, and of a particular contribution to a more wildly situated process.

The indeterminacy of practice means that practice change is neither evolutionary, nor arbitrary. A central theme underlying this chapter is that, especially from a career perspective, both collective but especially individual reflection about practice impacts practice change, not directly, but indirectly via inclinations to participate in various practice arenas or become part of “arrangements.” Thus practice change in some cases is linked to environment change, which can be volitional, a result of reflection, or a result of an embodied reaction, or sense of dissonance (Stark 2009) from previous practices or practice sites. This awareness should lead practice scholars to focus on how practice sites are filled, and successively linked. Naturally there are no guarantees that any individual will gain access to the practice sites, or projects, aspired to (therefore abstention is probably a stronger mechanism), nor that the confluence of people and resources will be as foreseen, and then what takes place in these sites is again contingent and indeterminate. However, situations getting loaded in various manners make some processes and outcomes more likely than others. What needs to be kept in mind is that the roads to what converges in a given site are series of heterodox social practices, even what is described in terms of solitary contemplation and reflection. In order to more fully understand change and stability in artistic practices we need to understand at least the more significant practices and sites that link up to compose the sites where artistic practice is most coherently manifest. We need to understand from a practice perspective how such sites are loaded or populated with humans and material.

Chapter 7: Connecting temporary and permanent organizing: Tensions and boundary work in a series of film project⁵

Abstract

This paper investigates the relationship between a permanent organization and a series of temporary organizations. It draws on an in-depth study of the process through which a Danish film production company, seeking to balance innovation and persistence in a troubled industry, struggles to realize a novel children's film and its sequels. The study reveals tensions at different levels as well as boundary work and boundary roles that address them, bringing in shadows of past and future projects. The study extends the understanding of the dialectic between temporary and permanent organizing by emphasizing how ongoing work at different boundaries affects the permanent and temporary organizing's connectedness and outcomes. It also challenges the overly bracketed view of temporary organizations, suggesting a temporality perspective on temporariness.

Key words: temporary organizing, permanent organizing, projects, field, innovation, persistence, boundaries, boundary work, temporality

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Connecting temporary and permanent organizing:

Tensions and boundary work in sequential film projects

[W]e are the projects. We are nothing, we don't exist if the projects are not there, we are a production company, you see. So when the wheels don't spin, then there is no company! ... I don't see them [the projects] as separate; they are an integrated part of this [Nimbus]. *Birgitte Hald, co-founder and CEO of Nimbus Film and executive producer of Antboy (Interview, 2015)*

Introduction

How are temporary organizations integrated into, or separated from, the permanent organizations in which they are embedded? What tensions does that connectedness entail and what outcomes does it lead to? What boundary work and boundary roles are involved in the process? A growing number of scholars of temporary organizing have acknowledged that “[n]o project is an island” (Engwall, 2003), emphasizing the complexity of the contextual embeddedness of temporary forms in their permanent environments (Windeler & Sydow 2001; Sydow & Staber, 2002; Grabher, 2002a,b, 2004; Sydow, Lindkvist & DeFillippi, 2004; Manning, 2008). This “multicontextuality” of temporary systems (Lampel, 2011) has been examined in relation to project-based firms or organizations that host or initiate them (Whitley, 2006; Hobday, 2000), project networks of which they are a part (Manning & Sydow, 2011), localities and institutional fields in which they operate (Grabher, 2002a; Maoret, Massa & Jones, 2011), and

professional communities whose shared role systems help coordinate their work (Bechky, 2006). It also involves latent organizations, quasi-firms and other more lasting routines and inter-personal collaborations (Eccles, 1981; Jones, 1996; Wittel, 2001; Blair, 2003; Starkey, Barnatt & Tempest, 2000; Manning & Sydow, 2011; Sydow, 2009; DeFillippi, 2015), as well as prior, present, and future projects and project ecologies that carry “shadows” of past exchanges and future possibilities (Engwall, 2003; Grabher, 2002b, 2004).

In conceiving temporary organizing in the context of permanent organizations, questions arise surrounding the nature of their connection and the tensions inherent in it. In some cases, project-based enterprises are “hollow” (Whitley, 2006), i.e. they are primarily legal vehicles or means for administrative convenience in realizing projects (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1998). In other cases, however, they support their projects with abilities and networks for accessing resources, as well as with knowledge and experience of defining work processes (Modig, 2007), depending on projects’ conformity with the parent organization’s strategic intent (Engwall, 2003). Projects, in turn, allow their “parent” organizations to experiment, learn, undertake change initiatives, engage in renewal, or enable cross-functional integration (Ford & Randolph, 1992; Engwall, 2003; Johansson, Löfström & Ohlsson, 2007; Sydow et al., 2004). For example, scholars have shown how creative projects, those offering a projective alternative to iterative organizational routines (Obstfeld, 2012), are a means for permanent organizations to undertake novel courses of action without fixed resource commitments (DeFillippi, 2002). Overall, project organizations’ impermanence and open-endedness have been considered attractive for “circumvent[ing] traditional barriers to organizational change and innovation” (Sydow et al., 2004:

1475) and helping transform organizations and institutions (Cattani, Ferriani, Frederiksen & Täube, 2011).

The temporary-permanent connection, while potentially mutualistic, is marked by some important demarcations, such as time, task, team, and transition (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Project entrepreneurs and managers “more or less reflexively tend to couple or decouple the project with or from its context” (Sydow et al., 2004, p. 1477). This leads to variations in projects’ detachment from the permanent organization (Johansson et al., 2007) and to potentially difficult-to-manage attachment-detachment dilemmas (Sahlin-Andersson & Söderholm, 2002). While a lot has been done to connect temporary and permanent forms of organizing, further work on the dialectic between them is needed, accounting for temporality, i.e. “the ongoing relationships between past, present, and future” (Schultz & Hernes, 2013, p. 1) in sequential temporary systems (Bakker, 2010). Traditionally, temporary organizations have been depicted as “sheltered from the past, present, and future” (Bakker & Janowicz-Panjaitan, 2009, p. 126). Bringing in temporality and an agentic view of time (Reinecke & Ansari, 2015) could expand the understanding of temporariness, revealing what makes projects amenable to different types of boundaries and boundary work.

Notions, such as boundaries and boundary work, are particularly useful for investigating the temporary-permanent dialectic, as they allow us to capture relationality between the temporary and the permanent as a fundamentally social process (Lamont & Molnár, 2002). However, while various studies have hinted on aspects of project boundaries and boundary work (Long Lingo & O’Mahony, 2010), a critical synthesis of the connection between temporary and permanent

organizing is yet to emerge. There is a need for a “systematic cataloguing of the key mechanisms associated with the activation, maintenance, transposition or the dispute, bridging, crossing and dissolution of boundaries” (Lamont & Molnár, 2002, p. 187) at those junctions where temporary and permanent organizing meet. This also calls for multi-dimensional and multi-level theorizing (Sydow et al., 2004).

This paper addresses the void by examining connections between temporary organizing (a sequence of related projects) and a more permanent context (project-based firm and field). It draws on an in-depth, multi-method study of the process through which a Danish film production company struggles to realize a novel children’s film, titled *Antboy*, and its two sequels. Developing the project into a series increases the temporary and the permanent organization’s time horizons, yet poses challenges for innovation. Tensions appear at a project’s boundaries with other projects, the film company, and the field. Boundary work and roles bring in shadows of past and future projects to address the tensions, balancing persistence and innovation.

The study makes two main contributions to existing literature. First, by unravelling tensions and how they are resolved through boundary work, it extends the understanding of the dialectic between temporary and permanent organizing. In doing so, it responds to calls for multi-dimensional and multi-level research (Sydow et al., 2004) and for more work on the dialectic between temporary and permanent organizing (Bakker, 2010). Second, by showing how shadows of past and future projects come into play in present projects, creating and spanning boundaries, it broadens the notion of temporariness with that of temporality,

challenging the overly “bracketed”, “closed time” depiction of temporary organizations as “protective bubbles” (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995; Bakker & Janowicz-Panjaitan, 2009). A temporal perspective allows the viewing of the temporary-permanent connection as an ongoing accomplishment, shaped by reinterpretations of the past and updated future ambitions (Schultz & Hernes, 2013).

The paper proceeds as follows. First, we provide a theoretical background for our study, focusing on boundaries and boundary work in temporary organizing. Second, we outline the study’s methodology, overviewing the Danish film industry as empirical context, the film production company Nimbus as an empirical setting, and *Antboy* as an innovative series of projects. Next, we detail the main balancing act for Nimbus in terms of persistence and innovation and discuss the tensions experienced in the film projects’ realization and how these are resolved through their connections with the project-based firm and field funding institution, including temporality. The paper concludes with contributions and opportunities for further research.

Boundaries and Boundary Work in Temporary Organizing

Boundaries are borders or demarcation lines that distinguish actors into insiders and outsiders (Giyerin, 1999). They emerge, are constituted, modified, and reproduced as “subtle and complex products of action” (White, 1992, p. 127) and may lead to discontinuity in, or exclusion from, decisions, actions, and interactions (Long Lingo & O’Mahony, 2010; Akkerman & Bakker, 2011). Boundaries, as an

intrinsic element of organizing, are unstable, ambiguous, multi-faceted, and composite, and subject to ongoing definition and modification at an organization's margins (Hernes, 2004). Scholars have differentiated between different boundaries, e.g. social and symbolic boundaries (Lamont & Molnár, 2002), or mental, social, and physical boundaries (Hernes, 2004). Boundaries delimit temporary organizing to make it more manageable and exploit its benefits through boundary work (Sahlin-Anderssen, 2002).

The setting of a project's boundaries can take place at its "bracketing", when its starting-point is defined, with the purpose "to decouple the temporary organization from its general surroundings", providing it with special "place in history and its own identity" (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995, p. 446). Detachment can also happen in the production or execution stage, as for example with film sets as total institutions, cut off from their external context for their duration (Bechky, 2006). The final stage in a project trajectory, its formal termination, or other form of conclusion, may involve re-attachment to a more permanent system (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995), removing a previous boundary. Boundaries in creativity-driven, project-based fields, such as film, are also visible in practices, norms, routines, or status differences among professionals based on their experience, competence, recognition, and productivity (Faulkner & Andersen, 1987). A frequent demarcation in creative fields is the art-commerce one (Hirsch, 1972; Becker, 1982; Caves, 2000), which poses challenges for connecting creative and commercial communities, practices, and mind-sets (Lampel, Lant & Shamsie, 2000).

Boundaries come to life through boundary work, which consists of negotiating, establishing, managing, challenging, or removing demarcations. Just as there are different kinds of boundaries, there are diverse types of boundary-work. For example, Gieryn (1999) has noted expulsion, expansion, and protection of autonomy as forms of boundary work among scientists engaged in credibility contests. Others have investigated boundary crossing which involves “enter[ing] onto territory in which we are unfamiliar and to some significant extent therefore unqualified” (Suchman, 1994, p. 25). The categories’ literature has been extensively preoccupied with boundary work in the creation of (novel) output, e.g. borrowing across categories (Rao, Monin & Durand, 2005), or category expansion in which rivalling versions of a “de novo” category are embraced (Jones, Maoret, Massa & Svejenova, 2012).

Boundary work requires cooperation and coordination (Kellogg, Orlikowski & Yates, 2006), particularly when those involved are separated by professional, disciplinary and/or other divides (Bechky, 2003) and lack consensus (Star, 2010). These actions may entail actors playing specific boundary roles, which facilitate or block interaction across boundaries, such as boundary spanners, translators, brokers, mediators, or gatekeepers (Tushman, 1977; Aldrich & Herker, 1977; Kellogg et al., 2006; Long Lingo & O’Mahony, 2010; Foster, Borgatti & Jones, 2011). For example, Powell and Sandholtz (2012) show how ‘amphibious’ scientists imported ideas from the academic world into their venture capital-funded start-ups, creating from this combination a new form, that of the dedicated biotech firm. Long Lingo and O’Mahony (2010) detail how producers engaged in crafting project and role boundaries to make creative collaboration manageable.

Despite the importance of boundary work and boundary roles for temporary organizing, the literature on the former has developed rather independently from that of the latter. There are, however, some notable exceptions. For example, Long Lingo and O'Mahony's (2010) notion of "nexus work" in creative projects, which implies producers' brokerage for collaboration, involves definition of project boundaries. Further, extending Gieryn's (1983; 1999) boundary-work notion to projects, Sahlin-Andersson (2002) introduced the term "project boundary work" and distinguishes task, temporal, and institutional types. While the first two build on issues discussed elsewhere (e.g. Lundin & Söderholm, 1995), the third, which is about motivating projects by a zeal to break with, develop or renew certain institutions (Sahlin-Andersson, 2002), has received less attention.

Project boundary work is, by and large, a rhetorical activity. It depends on intertwined interpretations of a wider group of project facilitators and entrepreneurs, who engage discursively with different audiences to shape the project (Svejenova, Strandgaard Pedersen & Vives, 2011). It is also an instrumental activity that reflects multiple actors' goals and interests and, as such, constitutes "strategic practical action" (Gieryn, 1999, p. 23). Overall, it concerns a project's identity and determines its institutional framing: for example, by defining a project as "new and extraordinary", a permanent organization "opens it up for adventure" and signals experimentation with, and detachment from, organizational routines and institutional orders (Sahlin-Andersson, 2002, p. 259).

Research Context, Site, and Methods

This paper examines interactions at the boundaries between a more *permanent organization* - Nimbus Film - and a *sequence of temporary organizations* initiated and managed by it for the realization of a superhero children's film and its two sequels, and embedded in a *field context* of a financially pressured and unstable Danish film industry. In response to these pressures, since 2008 Nimbus Film, known for the artistic quality and “edgy” style of its feature films, has undertaken projects with a longer time horizon, such as an original film followed by sequels, e.g. *Antboy*, or TV series with famed Scandinavian crime themes, such as *The Bridge*, currently in its third season. Geared towards a wider audience and often, as a consequence, associated with commercial, rather than artistic, values and interests, these longer-term projects nonetheless “attempt to break new ground” (Nimbus Film website). For example, *Antboy* is an innovative project from two reference points (Castañer & Campos, 2002): Nimbus' own past (self-referentially), as it is its first sequel and superhero film, and the Danish film industry (the local field), as it is the first children's film that borrows across the superhero and realism genre boundaries, providing an artistic quality alternative to the family-comedy style, commercial children films. Being a sequel, *Antboy* challenges Nimbus' art-house project methods and abilities, as well as its experimental variation and procedural continuity routines (DeFillippi, 2015), which are geared towards making distinctive feature films. Below, we briefly outline research context, site, and methods for data collection and analysis.

Research Context

Denmark's film industry makes innovative artistic films of international renown, alongside commercial films for the local market. The 1990s witnessed the most significant experimentation, marked by the birth of Dogme 95, the avant-garde film movement, which introduced an alternative set of film making principles and

conventions that sought to preserve purity and freedom from special effects and other technical modifications. The first Dogme-certified film was Thomas Vinterberg's *Festen*, *The Celebration*, produced by Nimbus Film. The latter and Zentropa were the movement's most influential film production companies (Stevenson, 2003).

Danish film making is supported by state subsidies through the DFI's (Danish Film Institute) dual system of art and market funds. The former is earmarked for artistic films with cultural novelty and value, which enrich the filmic language, while the latter supports films with expected box office success. Funding for artistic films is provided through consultants who are industry insiders, often former film directors and editors. A board with industry representatives grants funding to films with the highest commercial potential. Like other European film industries, in 1989 a new film law was implemented to support films with commercial appeal, which led to the making of popular films and sequels that built on prior methods, films, and ideas. It also deepened the Danish film industry's divide into art-house and commercial domains with distinctive taste, values, work practices, and professional communities.

With the appearance and growing popularity of new online distribution channels and streaming services, and the industry's inability to come up with successful new business models, in the 2000s the film market shrank significantly and film investments became a riskier business than it had previously been. The first serious crisis in the Danish film industry was felt in 2007, when films supported by the DFI art fund experienced significant losses; this was less of a case for those films backed by the market fund (Deloitte, 2013). As a result, even the biggest

Danish art-house production companies could not continue working in their customary ways. Zentropa was sold to a bigger player, Nordic Film, while Nimbus laid off a third of its employees and received sizable bank loans with its owners' private property as collateral (Rottbøll, 2008). Overall, art-house film production companies began looking for new platforms and projects of a longer duration to ensure a more stable income. They turned their creativity towards TV series and sequels that had so far been characteristic of the industry's commercial domain. As a result, highly popular political drama and crime TV series were created, such as *The Killing*, *The Castle*, or *The Bridge*, collectively known as "Nordic Noir".

Research Site

Nimbus Film is the third biggest, and one of the most prolific, production companies in the Danish film industry, with over 40 projects - feature films, short films, and documentaries - realized since its inception in 1993. Having won awards and received nominations at important international film festivals, it is also highly regarded among Danish media and film professionals who are eager to get involved in its projects. Established by Birgitte Hald and Bo Ehrhardt, Nimbus started with a vision of making films of high artistic quality. Its productions differed greatly from the dominant genre within the Danish film industry of family comedies, as well as from sequels, TV series, war films and other commercial genres. In the first decade of the company's existence, the founders' vision and their belonging to the Dogme 95 film movement led to a domination of the artistic focus and established Nimbus Films as an art-house. Over time, and particularly since 2008, the company has become more open to films with a wider audience appeal.

We examine interactions between Nimbus, a permanent organization, and its longer-term, novel project sequence *Antboy* as a critical case of a temporary-permanent relationship. *Antboy* was inspired by a 2007 book trilogy, the rights of which were acquired by Nimbus Film, enabling the possibility for sequels to be made. The story is about 12-year-old Pelle who is bitten by a genetically modified ant and as a consequence develops super powers and a secret superhero identity, albeit experiencing failure as he explores their limits. The original project's distinctiveness and complexity resides not only in combining a Hollywood-style superhero genre with characteristic Danish humour and social realism for a children's audience, but also in its being followed by sequels, which challenges the temporary-permanent relationship in film, providing more stability and a longer time horizon to the project.

Methods for Data Collection and Analysis

We followed longitudinally the process of interaction between the permanent organization and the sequence of connected projects. Process research is particularly appropriate for addressing temporally evolving phenomena, as it unravels not only dynamic patterns in activities, but also the underlying mechanisms that help explain them (Langley, 2009). We distinguished three critical periods with distinctive connection between the permanent organization (Nimbus) and the respective temporary forms: initiation and abandonment (Antboy 0), revival and realization (Antboy I), and exploitation and renewal (Antboy II and III). For analytical purposes we considered the two sequel films together, as they had some similarities in terms of project routinization. Data on the first and larger part of the second period is retrospective, based on documentation and interviews with key participants. In the third period, the first sequel was followed ethnographically by the first author at the premises of

Nimbus Film from August to November 2013, as it was in development, and in January and February 2014, as it was being prepared for production. At the start of the ethnographic study, the original film had not yet premiered in Denmark.

During the ethnographic work, the first author interviewed and interacted informally with key members of the permanent and temporary organizations, as they engaged in developing ideas for the sequel, assembling the team, applying for funding, and preparing for production. The authors conducted follow up interviews in September 2015 to gain an insight into the sequels' development, Nimbus' strategic direction, and the connection to its other projects. A total of 30 interviews were conducted with 22 informants, who were relatively evenly distributed among the permanent organization, the projects, and the Danish film industry (see Appendix 1 for a list). The interviews amounted to 39.3 hours with an average duration of 1 hour and 20 minutes. They were transcribed and subjected to initial analysis in their original language (Danish or English).

Observations took place at different locations on the company premises, which provided exposure to, and enabled the collection of, impressions from different project domains, from the "upper office" where the creative triangle (director-writer-producer) was working on the project concept, to the "basement" where production designer and other production staff were "grounding" and materializing the project's 'filmic universe' (a term used by our informants to denote the ensemble of beings, things, events, and phenomena that inhabit a spatio-temporal frame in a film – see Souriau, in Branigan & Buckland, 2013, p. 133). Further, the first author kept a diary, which complemented the interviews with observations and impressions, facilitating data interpretations. As the

research evolved, it became clear that the projects' sequence provided a different connection to the permanent organization than the single projects, which contributed to Nimbus' persistence, yet challenged its ability for artistic innovation, representing a persistence-innovation balancing act.

In analysing the data, we used a grounded-theory approach (Charmaz, 2006), travelling back and forth between data and theory until main themes emerged. Coding began during the data collection phase, allowing the exploration of insights and subsequently relating them to different theoretical categories (Charmaz, 2006), as well as prompting interviewees on emerging issues. In the process, the two authors read through the gathered material, discussing extensively on numerous occasions potential concepts for theorizing and their relationships, as well as further data needed to unravel emerging patterns. Data was associated with the following main themes: (1) selection of talent and career practices, (2) envisioning and materializing an idea, (3) defining and managing boundaries between the temporary and the permanent organizing, and (4) defining and managing boundaries among a sequence of temporary organizations. For the purposes of this study we focused on and delved deeper in the latter two themes.

In unravelling themes, our interest was in connections, challenges, tensions, and boundary work between permanent and temporary organizing, as well as in temporality expressed in shadows of past and future projects. This analytical approach was followed through a focused coding process (Charmaz, 2006), informed by theories from the embeddedness perspective of temporary organization and boundary roles and work. Coding was done according to an incident-by-incident method for the observations (Charmaz, 2006). For the

interview transcriptions, codes were given to units of meaning, which ranged from a sentence to a paragraph. If in Danish, relevant excerpts of the interviews were translated into English after main themes had emerged. Visual data and materials were used selectively, as complementary clues on the spaces in which boundary work and permanent-temporary interaction unfolded. Finally, we made conceptual leaps based on abduction (Klag & Langley, 2013).

Findings

Our study revealed a complex and dynamic relationship between the permanent organization and the sequence of temporary organizations, characterized by challenges, tensions, and boundary work. We relate their relationship in two parts. Part I discusses temporary organizing as a permanent organization's balancing act between persistence and innovation. Part II delves into key stages in the process through which persistence and innovation are balanced in the projects' sequence.

Part I. Temporary Organizing as a Permanent Organization's Persistence-Innovation Balancing Act

Nimbus' main balancing act, as an independent company in a film field in crisis, was about enhancing its persistence by ensuring sufficient audience appeal on selected films, while preserving its art-house's innovative profile, i.e. making "artistic movies with an edge, leaving room for the broader audience appeal" (company homepage), "something that is fun ... while bringing in money" (Nimbus' CEO, 2014). Such movies, the CEO further explained, ensure visibility at major festivals and access to financing and network, which "makes us

interesting/attractive to directors, actors, and manuscript writers”. Nimbus’ co-founder and company executive (2015⁶) clarified further:

there is no room anymore for artistic films...the market is under so much pressure... if we make a feature film, ... we have to be very, very focused on making the films that we can see have an audience. We can make a limited audience movie if it can be realized with a limited financial investment aligned with the learning potential.

Thus, producers employed at Nimbus are given leeway to carry out projects if they can convince the team of their artistic merits and market viability. This presupposes stronger project integration in the company, compared to earlier years when film directors had ownership of both idea and project. Despite this strengthened attachment between projects and company, a gap remains that producers, through boundary work and roles, aim to close via their dual attachment to project and company: “[T]here is often a huge boundary between the production and the house [Nimbus]. ... We are the link, the producer and the producer assistant.... it’s special being split between two domains” (Producer Assistant, Nimbus, 2015). Discussions related to Nimbus’ project portfolio take place at the “Thursday meeting”, a strategic gathering that happens in the company’s lunch room, whereby CEO, executives, permanent producers, and head of administration, discuss topics such as the potential of new ideas to become projects, who to hire on projects, as well as how to solve problems with projects in progress. CEO and executive producer, as company partners have the final say on the initiation and continuation of projects. An idea formally becomes a project once it has been assigned with a project number.

⁶ Quotes come from interviews unless otherwise indicated.

Nimbus experienced a strong need for a persistence-innovation balancing act in 2007, when the industry faced a crisis and the films it had made did not attract the expected audience. As a result, the initiation of new projects and company survival were at stake. Despite the 2008 box office success with the film *Flame and Citron*, Nimbus was barely enduring and thus changed strategic direction, moving towards a 50:50 investment in feature films and TV series. As explained by Nimbus' CEO (2015), opening up to longer-term projects had several benefits:

That we now want to make sequels and ... more business of it, that is because it has become very difficult living on those art house movies...it's the same film people we use The big difference for us is the length of the projects and the economy in it. ...it gets much easier for us to predict things and adapt the organization. We can also invest in equipment that we can use ourselves and it gives a possibility for long range planning.

Within this longer-term company orientation, developing Antboy into a film and two sequels “was the plan from the beginning. We wanted to have a format that we could build on, not having to start over each time” (Company Executive, Nimbus, 2015). However, while increasing predictability, Antboy also brought Nimbus into the unknown territory of superhero-realism children films and sequels. Because of the boundary crossing and borrowing across genres, tensions appeared and required ongoing boundary work and roles.

Part II. Boundary Work and Roles in Connecting Temporary and Permanent Organizing

We identified three stages in the process of connecting temporary and permanent organizing: (1) initiation and abandonment, (2) revival and realization, and (3) exploitation and renewal, each discussed along main challenges, tensions, boundary work and roles, shadows of past and future projects, and outcomes (see Table 1 for an overview).

Table 1. Temporary and Permanent Organizing in Antboy’s Film Project Sequence*.

* Abbreviations: temporary organization (TO), permanent organization (PO), field (F)

Stage	Initiation & abandonment	Revival & realization	Exploration & renewal
Organizing			
Sequence of TO & project kind	Antboy 0, a social realism children film	Antboy I, a superhero-realism innovative children film	Antboy II & III, superhero-realism sequels
Film title & timeline (initiation – production – release)	- Spring 2010- discontinued before production in Fall 2010	Antboy Spring 2011 - October 2012 – October 2013	Antboy: Revenge of the Red Fury May 2013 – February 2014 - December 2014 Antboy 3 March 2014 – July 2015 - February 2016

PO-TO connection	Detachment	Strong attachment	Moderate attachment
TO's main challenge	Alignment	Experience	Optimal distinctiveness
Tensions at boundaries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>TO's staffing (TO-F)</i>: TO's genre-bridging needs vs field's limited talent 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Core TO team's authority (in TO)</i>: inexperienced core vs rest of team experienced in social realism - <i>Budget (PO-TO)</i>: PO's resources for project vs superhero genre's demands - <i>Funding (TO-F)</i>: core TO team's inexperience vs art-fund's experience requirements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Timing (across TOs; TO-F)</i>: urgency to advance sequels for freshness in audience memory and children actors' aging vs field norms for core team's involvement from start - <i>TO's collaboration (across TOs)</i>: renewal vs routinization/(non)rehearsing - <i>Budget (PO-TO)</i>: PO's surplus expectations vs TO's quality ambitions - <i>Funding (TO-F)</i>: first sequel's flopped

			performance vs market fund requirements
Boundary work/roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PO gives TO autonomy to develop project without investing in boundary work or roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - TO's core team self-selected (trust, shared references, commitment) with PO's approval and crosses genre boundaries to define novel filmic universe - CEO subsumes TO into PO; crosses TO-PO and TO-F boundaries (becoming producer, moderating with DFI, ensuring budget) to overcome inexperience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PO gives TOs more autonomy, yet insists on limited budgets and return on investment - CEO crosses TO-PO and TO-F boundaries (intervening in who/what roles (not) to rehire in the TOs to prevent former tensions and performing nexus work to get sequels started and funded) - TO's core team blurs and crosses role boundaries to resolve production problems

<p>Shadows of past and future TOs</p>	<p>Past: no similar projects as reference (Danish children and youth films lack artistic ambition and quality)</p> <p>Future: PO's vision for children films (manifesto) shapes project expectations</p>	<p>Past: Antboy 0's experience influences what to avoid for genre innovation to happen; prior TO members' collaborations offer trust and shared references</p> <p>Future: "Pitches" of active projects at Nimbus allow core team to enrol into the TO; PO's vision that film will become a sequel influences TO team's approach and commitment</p>	<p>Past: Antboy I's success legitimizes sequels' funding ("bragging book") and frames audience expectations for filmic universe; Antboy II's box office failure endangers Antboy III's public funding; sequels' theme and team adjusted with feedback from preceding films</p> <p>Future: sequels' theme and team adjusted with vision to protect PO's and TO team's artistic reputation; expectations for PO's return on investment in project series keeps TOs' budget low</p>
<p>Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public art fund refuses support for lack of novelty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public art fund supports TO - Antboy I over budget, innovation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - public market fund supports TOs - Antboy II improves artistic quality,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PO dissolves Antboy 0's TO, retaining project idea 	(1st Danish children superhero film), commercial and artistic success	winning awards and worldwide distribution; falters at box office <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Antboy III made on budget
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Stage 1 Initiation and abandonment. Traditionally, Danish children’s films are commercial, without an ambition for artistic quality. Nimbus’ CEO expressed her dissatisfaction with that in a manifesto and discussed it at the Thursday meetings and in informal conversations. The manifesto carried a vision to improve these films, making them more complex and attuned to a contemporary children’s audience. It connected well with the superhero-realism theme of the Antboy book trilogy, the rights of which Nimbus had acquired. The main challenge at this stage was the lack of alignment between permanent and temporary organizations on how the project should develop. The manifesto and trilogy created expectations in the permanent organization for the superhero-realism genre bridging in the project. However, the screenplay developed by the project team closely followed the bullying theme from the original book, toning down the superhero story.

Tensions. The biggest problem was finding an experienced project team for the creation of a new kind of children’s film and novel filmic universe. Experience with the genre was important: “you can play with people’s expectations and to do so it is necessary to be specialized in the field (genre) you work with” (Producer, 2013). However, it is difficult to fund and produce Hollywood-style films in Denmark (even if mixed with social realism), as the production of films in this

style was uncommon to the DFI and local film professionals. Most of the talent had worked either within family comedy or social realism. Only a few team members had made genre films and those who had, found children's films less attractive.

Boundary work and roles. Nimbus sought to enrol participation in the project and waited for extended periods of time, to no avail, for possible team members to show interest or become available. As the permanent organization had a rather vague idea of what the project could become, it was difficult to define and convey project boundaries to sceptical or busy professionals. At last Nimbus settled for an inexperienced team that was willing to work on the project. Nimbus's CEO, the project initiator and champion, detached herself from the temporary organization, not taking on a formal role in it and giving the hired team leeway to define the story line within the loose boundaries of her manifesto and the book:

I will never say "you can't do that", otherwise it's not fun to be here. Most of the time it shows afterwards if it was a good or a bad idea. Then I can disagree but often it's about working with the idea and then seeing if it becomes sustainable. It's a long process where you test the ideas ... I try to stay open towards it, well okay I question it until they become insecure and if then they still insist, then we run with it, unless it's really obviously underdeveloped.

This gave the temporary team ownership and freedom to develop the project in a desired direction. However, the absence of boundary work and boundary spanning roles to connect temporary and permanent organizations, as well as the shadows

from previous and future projects drawn on by the team, led to the development of a screenplay that did not meet expectations.

Outcomes. The idea was developed into a project, a team was recruited, and a story line developed. However, the new frontier in children's films envisioned in the manifesto was not reached. Nimbus' CEO was dissatisfied with the direction taken by the project and disengaged from it. Public funding from the DFI art fund fell through due to the project's lack of innovation and artistic merits. At that point, Nimbus CEO redrew the boundaries between temporary and permanent organization, reattaching the project idea back to Nimbus and dismissing the team. The project continued a latent existence in the permanent organization.

Stage 2 Revival and realization. Interest in the project was revived, driven also by book rights' time pressure: "It's important for both the publisher and the author that the book is not locked in a company unrealized", Nimbus' executive (2015) explained, as "that's a way for us to ensure that, if we want a book, we can get it ... for a reasonable price". A new project team was sought for its realization. The director and junior producer were enrolled proactively from another Nimbus project (a low budget horror short film on which both had worked), with the approval of Nimbus' CEO. The director *in spe* had discovered the opportunity to work on the project from the one-page "pitches" of active projects at Nimbus, some of which were still "orphans", i.e. they did not have a director. The junior producer's recollected (2013):

I can still remember the day when he (the director) was sitting in the canteen and looking at this piece of paper and he was sitting like this (wide open eyes and an overly excited facial expression) and then he ... said, "It

says that it needs a director. Is nobody making this one?" Then I told him "well, that one, I think you should of course be doing it". "YES! Shouldn't I!", and then we asked for permission, because he had never made a feature film before.

Once the director and junior producer had been engaged, a writer and a cinematographer interested in genre films that had worked previously with the director joined the core team. The project gained in commitment, passion for the superhero genre, shared references, and trust. However, the main challenge was experience, as writer, director, and producer had not made feature films before. In addition, both they and Nimbus, as a company, had never made a superhero genre film with special effects and stunts; this ultimately led to tensions within the project.

Tensions. Tensions resided at different levels of organizing and at different boundaries. The *first tension (within the temporary organization)* involved authority. The core team's filmic vision was inspired by the American superhero genre and style, while cast and crew were mainly embedded in Danish social realism's practices. The latter reverted back to old habits, insisting that something could not be done; this questioned the director's authority and vision and led to disagreements on set. Overall, the team did not collaborate with and support the director as defined by the field's role boundaries. His lack of feature film experience made it difficult to resolve these conflicts effectively.

The *second tension (between temporary and permanent organizations)* revolved around the ability to make an innovative, superhero style film on a limited budget. As both temporary and permanent organizations had no superhero genre experience, it was difficult to translate the screenplay into filmic scenes and use it to guide action, as well as to work with expensive special effects and stunts. Scenes had to be shot ad-hoc, without pre-planning, coming up with solutions to problems, or replacing and inventing scenes on the spot, with the result that filming was more expensive than initially envisioned. The budget did not allow much experimentation with special effects. As the director (2013) put it, “you can have 3 shootings of that... [yet] the scene only works with four ...if you remove one, it doesn’t work, but we cannot afford four”.

The *third tension (between project team and DFI as the field’s funding institution)* involved funding expectations. DFI subsidized “first and foremost film projects with film directors who have previously made a feature film” (DFI website, 2014). The DFI consultant saw potential in the book trilogy and an opportunity for innovation in children’s films, yet was uncertain as to how (well) an inexperienced team of unknown quality could take the project in the desired direction.

Boundary actions and roles. At this stage, the project’s budget, time, and task boundaries had been defined. Simultaneously, the permanent organization subsumed and coupled tightly the project within its boundaries, aligning visions, ensuring budget, and offering other project support to address tensions. The permanent organization did not intervene directly to resolve the *authority tension*, yet it did show support for the director. Regarding the *budget tension*, Nimbus exercised control over the project, its CEO approving major decisions made by the

project team, yet also accepting some additional production costs incurred in the creation of a credible and innovative filmic universe. The *funding expectations' tension* was managed by mediation from the permanent organization's CEO who took on a formal role on the project to enhance its credibility, bringing in the "shadows" of past projects realized by Nimbus and by her as an executive producer. DFI became a common external "enemy" for temporary and permanent organizations alike, thus strengthening their attachment to one another in a "common front".

Two *boundary roles* helped address tensions: the boundary spanner and the boundary challenger. The director acted as an essential boundary spanner for the project, borrowing across superhero and social realism genre boundaries, and connecting artistic and commercial demands. He was artistic enough, holding a Master's degree in fine arts, while interested in and specialized in genre films. As a team member put it: "He grew up in a time with all the big references and you can feel that he really wants the American bigness, big brass bands and all his references are big movies and in a super great nerdy manner". However, the lack of experience, status, and shared language with the rest of the crew made it difficult for the director to perform his role. As he explained (2013): "... that's my mistake, I should have followed my intuition much more and said, ...we shoot it from over here, then we just have to make it work. It depends on experience and how courageous you are when you stand there and everyone is watching you".

To legitimate the project and to connect it to the permanent organization, Nimbus' CEO became its executive producer, acknowledging (2015), "I was on Antboy because it's my darling. Bo normally does that, he is executive [producer] on all

films but he was making The Bridge [TV series] at that time”. In this role, she participated in the meetings between the core project team and DFI consultants, acting as a boundary challenger. In her words:

I knew that I had to be on the meeting at the film institute (DFI), otherwise they would have just crushed the three people [director, writer, producer] who had no experience and none of them had made a feature film before, it would have never made it through... and it was as expected a long fight... and finally we got the money.

The “fighting” for the project was grounded in the shadows of past achievements, e.g. reputation and track record of Nimbus and its CEO, and expectations for the future, e.g. that the film will have sequels. As the CEO was also a project entrepreneur, she stated that “we are making this film no matter what... we will go to some other funding system if (the DFI consultant) is not in on it” (2014). When they were initially rejected by DFI, Nimbus started the project with its own resources and applied for funding again at a later date.

Outcomes. Antboy I received DFI funding and was realized. As explained by a DFI consultant (2014), there was a gain for the industry in taking the risk:

[W]hen the movie was recommended [for funding] at the DFI’s leadership meeting, I said: Antboy is a movie that we meet while it is still up in the air, let’s see what happens. It’s a high risk that needs to be taken... saying no for the sake of security is just silly! We have much more to win by giving it a go.

It achieved audience appeal comparable to that of traditional commercial children films; yet it was of a higher artistic value. It drew festival attention and international distribution interest (e.g., it was screened in the US, and dubbed in English), and critics appreciated it for its charm, humanity, sense of adventure, and its “elegant balance between action, comic, and Danish family film tradition”, being “possibly the greatest “little” superhero from Denmark to date”.

Stage 3 Exploitation and Renewal. Antboy II and III were sequels based on the Antboy I film. As such, their main challenge was to be optimally distinctive, exploiting and renewing the filmic universe, improving its quality, and resolving previous tensions.

Tensions. The *first tension* concerned timing. It involved working under time pressure, while ensuring a timely engagement in the process of all relevant parties. Time pressure was high for the sequels, as the children actors were quickly turning into teenagers. Speed was also necessary to ensure that the film’s universe and brand remained fresh in the audience’s memory. To keep up the pace, Nimbus’ CEO initiated the screenplay’s writing, meeting the producer and writer without the director, who was finalizing Antboy I’s production. The screenplay became severely delayed, as mistakes from the original film had to be fixed; this obstacle further impeded the project’s progression and planning. Furthermore, this created tensions within institutionalized project role boundaries. In the auteur tradition, the director expected ownership from the project’s idea initiation, and not just to execute someone else’s vision (screenplay) in order to be credited for making an artistic film.

The *second tension* concerned collaboration in the temporary organization. This centred on project routines through retaining the same project team for the sequels and the need for continuous innovation within Antboy's filmic universe. As a producer put it: "the [filmic] universe has already met the audience ...it got its own life that we ... are in dialogue with when we create the third [movie]". Thus, it was more difficult to experiment within a frame defined not only by time and budget, but also by audiences expectations (the shadow cast by Antboy I on its two sequels), in order to achieve sufficient aesthetic coherence, as explained by the director (2013):

...the format it has been shot in, it is American letterbox, which is a 1980s format...we keep that format on the second movie because we think that if you want to watch the first and the second, then it needs to be the same. Then there is no point all of a sudden making something that is in scope and looks like a western, well that just doesn't work.

Furthermore, there were both expectations for rehiring the original project team on the sequels, given their experience with story, vision and filmic universe, as well as the shared artistic language and reference frame, and the need for team renewal to achieve optimal distinctiveness, i.e. the sequels to be similar enough to the original film, yet sufficiently different from it and from each other.

The *third tension* was a budget one, between the permanent organization's expectations for higher returns (as it had invested its own resources in the films) and the project team's hopes for bigger budgets as a result of Antboy I's box office success and the need to sustain some innovation. As Nimbus' CEO (2014) explained:

That's what I fight a bit about with Eva, Lea [Antboy producers] and Ask [Antboy director], that it [the movie] should become ... a better business. Yes, but now it [Antboy I] is successful, the investment in it [sequel] should be bigger (voicing Ask, Lea and Eva's argument). ... It shouldn't! ... it becomes pointless ... if it always just breaks even.

The *final tension* was about public funding. Antboy I's box office performance meant that Antboy II would in theory qualify for support from the DFI market fund. However, its own performance did not fulfil those requirements, and DFI refused to support the second sequel, which led to the need for the permanent organization to step into the breach.

Boundary actions and roles. Boundary work helped to address the tensions. The producers in collaboration with the director made decisions as to who should – or should not – be rehired on the sequels, based on informal discussions with and on expressions of opinion by key Antboy I professionals. Decisions had to be well justified, especially as links between professionals and project team, consisting of close collaborators and even relatives, would have to be broken. For example, team members who had challenged the director were not rehired, thus giving him the opportunity to make a fresh start, as he was already more experienced and had the potential to make an exceptional film. Further, co-producing with a German company on the sequels redrew the boundaries for what roles could be rehired, as a percentage of the film budget had to be spent on location in the co-producer's home country. This allowed the hiring of more experienced companies in the domains of visual effects and other technical areas, thereby enhancing the superhero universe's quality and credibility.

To sustain novelty and artistic quality, despite the commercial character of the sequel, attention on Antboy II was devoted to what could be changed or introduced to give the project team new expressive opportunities. The story was “moved” to winter and made more international, enhancing the American “larger than life look” that had already been initiated in Antboy I. This was achieved by shooting on location in Hamburg, Germany, for a week, where streets and houses were bigger than in Denmark. Based on feedback on previous films, Antboy III was set in the summer, “bringing back the light and the humour”. Hiring a star cast and investing in more stunts, however, led to the budget being exceeded. As a result, the producer and director cut three days of production to save costs and improve quality. To save time, they adapted their art-house working methods to those in the commercial film domain, which proved to be a challenge. As expressed by the cinematographer: “In TV you say OK, we just take this scene in one picture... it’s not easy to do that being true to our story-telling method... our concept and the way we cover the scenes”. He and the director shot fewer scenes and followed fewer and simpler filmic grips: “it was a style we developed. If you do it a few times, at least three, the ‘thematic three’”, you can ensure an aesthetically coherent expression, appreciated in the art-house domain.

Nimbus’ CEO performed nexus work, influencing role boundaries of the project participants and acting as boundary spanner between the temporary and the permanent organizations, thus serving the interests of both. In response to the DFI commercial fund’s reluctance to support Antboy III, because of Antboy II’s lack of success at the box office, she sent a “*pralebog*” (from Danish, a “bragging book”), which used the shadows of previous successful projects to make the case for the funding of a second sequel. She also got endorsements by influential actors, such as directors of leading Danish cinemas who affirmed that they

believed in the new film. An external consultant was invited as a project mediator in the creation of a screenplay as a common ground for all parties involved, seeking to prevent previous tensions. Cinematographer, director, writer, and location manager proactively blurred their role boundaries to ensure collaboration in the realization of a coherent filmic universe within budget. The cinematographer, being the most experienced core team's member, crossed institutionalized role boundaries, by getting involved in pre-production and unofficially becoming a "co-author", and playing an active role in solving potentially problematic (for production) screenplay elements.

Outcomes. The two sequels were funded by the DFI market fund and related to the original film. As a result, Antboy I, II, and III had clear boundaries set between them to ensure their optimal distinctiveness, yet also sufficient connections that carried forward the filmic universe and some unresolved tensions. As Antboy III progressed through post-production, another Nimbus team was working on translating the Antboy story and brand into an animated series, which was inspired by and connected to Antboy's filmic universe. In this way, its longer-term conception would open up yet another path to support Nimbus' persistence and innovation.

Discussion

This study provided a longitudinal account of the connection between permanent and temporary organizing, the latter involving a series of related projects in a field with a distinctive art-commerce boundary and strong genre conventions. Our vantage point was the permanent organization and how, in a volatile industry, it created attachments to, and detachments from, its projects. We showed how the

permanent organization was strategically driven by a persistence-innovation balancing act. It brought in shadows of past and future projects as part of its boundary work to resolve tensions. Below we detail the multi-level and, at times, contentious meaning of these temporary-permanent connections as a way for advancing the understanding of projects in context and enriching the embeddedness perspective of temporary organizing with a more dialectic and long-term view (Sydow et al., 2004; Bakker, 2010), which is also attentive to temporality (Hernes & Schultz, 2013).

Connection between temporary and permanent organizations. Our study showed how the permanent organization changed its attachment to the projects in the series, drawing and redrawing boundaries and, in that way, influencing projects' outcomes. For example, in the first stage, the company was detached from the initiated project, providing its team with leeway to develop it, albeit within unclear boundaries. The project's evolving in a direction that did not fit to the company's vision, led to its abandonment, especially as it also failed to gain support from the field's funding institution due to a lack of novel artistic value. As Engwall (2003) has noted, which project ideas survive depend on how relevant they are to the permanent organization and how they are aligned with the norms and values of the organization.

We extend Engwall's (2003) strategic view of projects in two ways. First, our case study shows that choices related to temporary organizing involve not only a permanent organization's strategic considerations, but also its balancing acts. The need to combine persistence with innovation determined a longer time horizon for some projects and stronger connectedness among them (e.g., sequels). Second,

depending on the nature of the balancing act, challenging an organization's routines could be precisely what projects are needed for. For example, the abandoned project Antboy 0 was no less strategic for the company than Antboy I, which was then realized. However, the former did not defy institutional norms and values enough, failing to borrow across genre boundaries and fulfil its envisioned innovation potential. Third, the relationship between company strategy and project support could also work reversely, i.e. the closer the project's attachment to the permanent organization, due to who its champion is or where in the organization it is affiliated, the more likely it is that the project is better aligned with the parent organization's strategic priorities and has more opportunities for survival, given the longer past and future and which shadows the company can bring in. For example, Antboy 0 had little attachment to Nimbus, its team failing to understand and align sufficiently with the production company's strategic vision. Thus, we extend Engwall's (2003) insights, suggesting that to understand a project's likely survival, it is important not only to acknowledge its strategic importance for the company, but also to account for the boundary work in which the latter engages in realizing the project's strategic potential, creating or removing boundaries through shadows of past and future. Such boundary work allows for better adjustment of expectations between temporary and permanent organizations.

Connections among past, present, and future temporary organizations.

Examining a project sequence challenges affirmations about temporary organizations as 'left-bracketed', without a common history (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995) and allows an insight into their connectedness and the nature of their boundaries. Antboy I was a creative project (Obstfeld, 2012), borrowing from a superhero genre, with which temporary and permanent organization had no experience or shadows from the past to bring in. That challenged film-making

routines, creating tensions due to a lack of past practices to inform present decisions. However, the lack of past shadows also allowed for experimentation that made *Antboy I* an innovative film with a distinctive filmic universe. For Nimbus, *Antboy I* was an investment in the future and thus exceeding budget was acceptable, due to shadows from future gains, i.e. expected future income from the sequels.

Antboy II was also a rather creative project, as Nimbus had not previously made a sequel and had no routines for it. However, *Antboy I*'s filmic universe, the learning experience and the feedback from critics provided shadows of the past that fed practices and expectations into the sequel. *Antboy II* had to surpass *Antboy I* in mastering the hero genre and universe, in order to keep the artistic reputation of the project crew and film production company intact. Furthermore, shadows of past tensions were eliminated through boundary work, e.g. by not rehiring certain professionals. Shadows from *Antboy I* provided a story of success, which both ensured funding from the DFI market fund and posed the need for *Antboy II* to surpass the preceding film, thus making *Antboy II* more expensive. That, in turn, challenged Nimbus' future expectations for returns from *Antboy II*.

Antboy III, as a second sequel, involved routinization (Sydow, 2009), benefitting from and being constrained by the preceding projects. On *Antboy III*, many past shadows provided cues for present actions and limited experimentation, which made it difficult to create an innovative film. The need to further professionalize the project in the superhero genre posed further challenges to the normal Danish

commercial feature film budget. As a result, innovation happened in the practice of cutting the number of production days.

Overall, temporary organizations conceived in a connected sequence are expected to have an optimal distinctiveness (Zuckerman, 2016) from one another, that is, a degree of similarity with the original project, warranting a recognizable filmic universe, and a degree of difference from it and from one other, bringing in sufficient novelty and ensuring each project's unique identity and place in history (Lundin & Söderland, 1995). Previous projects from the sequence carried a shadow of the past (including unresolved tensions) over to subsequent projects, while the possibility for subsequent projects (i.e. knowing that sequels will evolve from an initial project) as well as the existence of a book trilogy, on which the film adaptation was based, carried a shadow of the future back to the original project. Thus, our findings challenge affirmations that “[p]roject members operate in a protective bubble, guarded from the shadow of the future and the burdens of the past” (Miles, in Bakker & Janowicz-Panjaitan, 2009). We also address Engwall's (2003, p. 789) call for increasing research's temporal scope, “analysing how project practices evolve through history over prior, present, and future projects”. In that, research on alliance portfolios could bring helpful analogies and potential insights (Wassmer, 2008).

Connection between temporary organizations and a field (mediated by a permanent organization). As previously noted in the literature, projects are embedded not only in permanent organizations, but also in institutional fields, whose norms they may occasionally challenge (Sahlin-Andersson, 2002; Cattani et al., 2011). Institutions provide resources, materials, knowledge and practices but also set regulatory restraints and enforce institutional conventions (Sydow & Staber, 2002). While the relationship between a project and a field was not at the

heart of our study, it did unravel some aspects of it that have implications for projects' outcomes, especially as the series of projects we followed were motivated by willingness to defy certain institutions (Sahlin-Andersson, 2002), that of Danish children films. The first connection between project and field, in terms of the latter's public funding institution supporting the former, was regularly mediated by the permanent organization due to resulting tensions. The mediation involved creating a joint front with the temporary organization, signalling expertise (Jones, 2002) through the CEO becoming the project's executive producer, bringing in shadows of previous successful projects (e.g. through the bragging book) and using social skills to mobilize support (Fligstein, 1997, 2001) from leaders of core organizations in the field (e.g. the movie theatre directors).

The second connection concerns the malleability of the institutionalized system of project roles that helps coordination (Bechky, 2006), especially when a project has to be managed by a rather inexperienced core team. This malleability does not only involve interventions by the producer as someone who defines role boundaries. It includes a multi-party effort and willingness to blur, contest, or at times even ignore established role boundaries in the project's interest. Similar to Long Lingo and O'Mahony (2010), we found that when there were attempts to challenge the expertise of the director, the production company "stepped in", e.g. it intervened by changing the composition of the sequels' teams (despite expectations for rehiring). Overall, by looking at the connection between projects and aspects of the field, we address Engwall's (2003) call for research on temporary organizing to increase its organizational scope, analysing how project practices connect with long-term institutions.

The study has limitations that invite further research. First, our vantage point was the permanent organization, which influenced our perspective of connections with temporary organizations. Further research should examine the relationship from a project team's perspective, as that may provide new and diverging insights on potential tensions and boundary work. Second, we investigated the relationship of a single organization with its projects. A comparison across parent companies would provide an opportunity to discern whether the nature of strategic balancing acts pursued has an influence on the attachment to their projects. Third, we advanced a temporality view of temporary organizing, showing how shadows of past and future projects are reinterpreted for the needs of present projects. In this way, we focused on projects that were conceived as connected. Further research into the temporality view of temporariness should look at other manifestations of such reinterpretations of a project's history and future.

Conclusion

This study makes two main contributions to the literature on temporary organizing. First, by revealing how tensions are resolved through boundary work at different levels, and thereby drawing on and reinterpreting past and future projects, it extends the understanding of the dialectic between temporary and permanent organizing (Bakker, 2010). In this way, it also responds to Sydow et al.'s (2004) calls for multi-dimensional and multi-level research. Second, by bringing in a temporality perspective (Hernes & Schultz, 2013), which captures the interplay of past and future projects' shadows in realizing present projects, it opens up the notion of temporariness and the "bracketed", "closed time" view of temporary organizations (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995; Bakker & Janowicz-Panjaitan, 2009). In further examining the temporality of temporariness, it would be useful to focus on how different actors from the permanent and temporary

organizations strategically re-interpret their past and future when shaping projects in the present.

In addition, the study adds a nuance to Sydow et al.'s (2004, p. 1475) acknowledgment that project organizations allow a circumventing of barriers to innovation, showing that they may also allow a circumventing of barriers to persistence by offering possibilities for routinization (Sydow, 2009), in turn creating barriers to innovation. The balancing of persistence and innovation requires a strategic view of temporality (Reinecke & Ansari, 2015), pro-actively delimiting those shadows of projects that are obstacles and potentiating those that provide clarity for the project's potential and trajectories into the future. This is particularly so in cases of project sequences, in which each project is burdened by numerous shadows from previous and future related projects, and needs to establish its optimal distinctiveness (Zuckerman, 2016), despite of – as well as through – those shadows. Further, our study adds to the discussion on boundaries and boundary work in temporary organizing, which has been dominated by a focus on temporal bracketing, as well as on discussions of project delimitations based on budgets, tasks, and teams (Lundin & Söderland, 1995; Sahlin-Andersson, 2002; Bakker, 2010). Instead, we suggest that a project's delimitation is a dynamic process influenced by ongoing boundary work, as well as by the nature and degree of the temporary organization's attachment, not only to the permanent organization and the field but also temporally, to other past and future projects realized by the members of the permanent and temporary organizations.

Finally, our study has implications for research on creative industries, which has tended to dichotomize individual projects into artistic and commercial or, at best,

to emphasize their paradoxical nature and the need for a balancing act (DeFillippi & Arthur, 1998; Lampel et al., 2000). Examining a series of related projects and their connection with permanent organizing allows the revealing of a complex dynamic that unfolds at the art-commerce boundary, which is triggered by changing interests and evolving balancing acts of multiple actors, as they continuously create and/or resolve tensions through boundary work. It also permits the unravelling of processes of stabilization that involve establishing and renewing routines that enable both experimentation and procedural continuity (DeFillippi, 2015). Last but not least, it lends itself to a temporality perspective (Hernes & Schultz, 2013) that is attentive to how past and future are reinterpreted and used resourcefully through temporal brokerage (Reinecke & Ansari, 2015), thereby creating, crossing, or managing boundaries for creative projects to get realized.

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Chapter 8: Discussions and conclusion

Discussions

In this dissertation I have researched how transcending organization organizes work and employment in temporary systems using the Danish film industry as a case for investigation. This research centers on aesthetics as a transcending organization that is inherently embedded within practices, providing order and boundaries for work and employment. Transcendental aesthetic practices are a sort of embedded knowledge that allows practitioners to work efficiently according to standards, based on aesthetic judgement. The three subthemes look into these practices in relation to selection, careers, and projects and provide a nuanced picture of transcending organization.

I provide a partial, empirically grounded answer to the overarching research question:

How do aesthetics embedded in practices organize employment and work in creative industries?

This question was answered through systematizing the current theoretical knowledge on transcending organization in creative industries and empirically investigating this question through three subthemes: 1) aesthetic selection practices, 2) practicing aesthetics over the course of careers, and lastly, 3) a study of boundary work on aesthetic boundaries within a project.

Transcending organization is a multifarious phenomenon that organizes and manifests itself in various manners. Theoretically, I identified seven forms of transcending organization within creative industries. I center primarily on aesthetics as a result of the data found in my empirical case. The empirical findings of this dissertation elaborate on this framework about how work and employment is organized through three studies on the Danish film industry. Each

paper sheds light on different aspects of how work and employment is organized a creative industry.

The first paper: 'Human resource selection for aesthetic skills', answers the overall research question by illuminating how aesthetics as a core dimension of transcending organization is embedded into the practices of how producers select people for projects and vice versa. These practices shed light on both what organizes work and what organizes employment. It first of all explore the work activities enrolled in practices, having certain embedded aesthetics that producers practice when selecting people and projects. Gaining insight into how people are aesthetically judged and how sense-making socially plays into selection practices provides important insights into answering questions about who gets the job and why; a direct contributions to explaining how employment is organized in creative industries. Understanding how people are selected is a part of also describing the boundaries of a practice, as some practitioners will be judged as in or out and hence also included or excluded in the practice based on its transcending organization aesthetic.

The second paper, 'Artistic practices over careers in film,' answers the overall research question by showing how film workers learn, refine and abandon practices and their adherent tastes over the course of careers. This sheds light on the other side of the employment relationship, namely how individual practitioners become practitioners and by that reenact, refine or abandon certain ways of practicing over time. Through these insights it provides explanations of how work is organized over time seen from the focus of individual and collective learning, knowing and refining tastes over time.

The third paper: ‘Connecting temporary and permanent organizing: tensions and boundary work in series of film projects’, answers the overall research question of this dissertation by showing how work and employment is organized within a project whose *raison d’etre* is to challenge the aesthetic boundaries of two art worlds. This paper provides in-depth insights into what happens to work practices when they are expected to be changed and carried out on unfamiliar ground. The *Antboy* case in this paper show how learning happens in a creative project and how practices are changed through experimentation. This paper both shows how aesthetics as a key dimension of transcending organization informs practitioners within an art world and what happens when practices from distinct, opposing art worlds are expected to merge into new practice. This informs the overall research question by both explaining how people are selected for projects that breaks with existing communities of practices, as well as how people are selected over a sequel of projects in the balancing of renewal and change. This provides in-depth understandings of how employment and work within a project is organized when the transcending organization of aesthetics is challenged and potentially under transition as a result of the boundary work of the project.

Understanding how people are selected is a part of also describing the boundaries of a practice, as some practitioners will be judged in or out and hence also included or excluded in the practice based on its aesthetic. The analysis of this paper provides an essential insight into understanding the transcending organization in film which of which aesthetics is a core dimension. This analysis nuances the work of Howard Becker (1982) by providing descriptive in-depth studies that elaborate and illustrate how art worlds are created and changed through the work and judgement of practitioners – delving into the aspects of

learning and knowing. An important discussion that the findings heralds are the relations between learning and knowing in relation to refinements and transition of practices. In this discussion I will draw out two empirical examples that opens important debates on these matters.

The first example is the one of a film director whose taste became too good for what she could practice showing that taste and practical skills can develop in a non-synchronous manner (in the second paper). Taste is embedded tacit knowledge that enables people to judge the world they encounter based on learned social practices and their aesthetics. The example of the director discussed in the second paper poses a new challenge to explaining how performances and practices are refined. As stated by Gherardi 2009: 545) *“Taste shapes work practices and refines them through negotiation and reflectivity, which suspend the flow of the action in order to intervene and savour the practice and express an aesthetic judgement of it.”*

Taste is a negotiation and reflection of the work practices which implies a break with enacting the current practices. It challenges and seeks to intervene into the flow, and by doing so new ideas for practicing emerge. However, the challenge in this is if the negotiated taste is possible to realize with the current knowledge, embodied abilities of practicing taste, and tools and materials available. In the case of the director, the disjuncture identified was between taste, vision and ability, or to use the language applied in the paper, a disjuncture between a dimension of “self” and a dimension of “expression” – the union of which is necessary for successful practice. In this example, work was accomplished, but the practice was deemed unsatisfactory.

This dissertation sheds light on the tensions that emerge for practicing work during practice change or transition and the role of aesthetics and taste in this

transition. Furthermore, this is linked to the sense of frustration that practitioners feel when tastes are negotiated and create a vision for future practices. This creates a gap between the current practices and projections of what is to become in the future. There are boundaries to how far you can go with refining your performances (explored with multiple examples in the second paper). The leap between the tastes embedded within the current practice, that after being negotiated and reflected upon change the sense of what is good taste, creates a gap between the actions and the taste within the practice. This suggests that even through taste is learned through the process of participation in practicing – taste is both a reflexive and a executing practice because people can imagine much more than what we can do, a tension can arise and calls for experimentation which is seen in the work practices described in the third paper of this dissertation paper about the creative project *Antboy*. *Antboy* was initiated as a reflexive idea about a future taste wherein social realism and the hero genre are merged. This was initially described in the manifesto by the CEO of the company Nimbus Film and over time this was negotiated and reflected upon while experimenting with refining practices. This gap is a gap between knowing and learning (Gherardi, 2011) In this dissertation this is also explained as tensions that influence career development for individuals. This disconnection in regard to aspiration versus ability results in a sense of frustration and even, as we see in the empirical material, career stagnation.

The second example from the findings of this dissertation sheds light on one of the central discussions of this dissertation, namely balancing amounts of persistence and change and how work and employment is organized in this span centering on the tensions between learning and knowing. The case, *Antboy* was initiated by the CEO according to a need for change and for entering new markets while also challenging the current aesthetic boundaries in the Danish film industry. In this

example the CEO drew on the concurrent transcending organization of the art world and its aesthetic boundaries, while challenging them. This was a case of imagination wherein her taste was diverging from the current taste of two opposing art worlds within the Danish film industry in which she was a-front runner in the one (“arthouse” or “quality film”). This taste image was manifested in the project *Antboy*. Enrolling people to this project was a challenge because the taste of the project didn’t match the concurrent knowledge in the industry. As a result it was necessary to find someone who had potential for bridging the two art worlds’ tastes and not least finding film workers where the learning required to reach the imagined taste was within reach. More teams and people failed in attempts to deliver on this, and in the end a young team was attached to the project. Their authentic interest reflected a taste that despite lack of feature film experience adhered to the project. Since taste is embedded in people, people are unable to “fake it” and pretend to have that specific taste. They will be found out because, as the first paper on aesthetic selection illustrates, it requires a vocabulary and engagement, and contextualized, interpretive references to prior movies to express taste. This opens an interesting debate about careers. Svejenova (2005) emphasizes the need and process of making an authentic career through following the path with the heart. The findings of this dissertation elaborates hints on this debate through the cases. In the cases presented here we see examples of inability to practice “unauthentically” where it was impossible to practice beyond their embedded taste without consequences (Becker, 1982). It needs to feel right! The findings of this dissertation elaborates on this point as it shows that this is true for the reason that tastes are learned by practicing and feeling is a way of knowing. As a result what you feel is what you know. Tastes can become out of step with what can be practiced and create a sense of being unauthentic, but if deliberately people try to perform ‘stretch-work’ (O’Mahony & Bechky, 2006) beyond that what they feel, the risk of failing is great. Another point to add to this debate is who gets to

define the project and the associated taste? Answering this question is beyond the scope of this dissertation but is an interesting avenue for further research. What can be explained here is that when projects are based on imagined tastes defined by others than those who are supposed to carry out the project, the risk of failure in practicing the desired taste can be difficult, not least if no shadows from the past guide the direction for the imagined taste.

Contributions to theory and its implications

Overall this dissertation contributes to research on organizing in temporary systems taking the Danish film industry as an extreme case illuminating transcending organization. There have been several calls for further research on transcending organization that order work and employment in temporary systems. The need for further understanding of these matters is great, and stated by scholars from diverse research fields e.g. work in the new economy (Cappelli & Keller, 2013), project based organizations (Manning & Sydow, 2011; Sydow 2009), and creative industries research (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2009; Eikhof, 2010, Haunschild, 2003,2004; Starkey et al., 2000; Lampel et al., 2000). This dissertation contributes theoretically to a more nuanced understanding of transcending organization by connecting the literature on transcending organization with the practice based perspective. This breaks the traditional macro-micro, structure- agency, material-non-material and aesthetic- scientific divides. This allows us to shed light on the transcending organization linking social orders to how work is practiced in certain ways. Both theoretical and empirical contributions are made by providing explanations for the tensions and challenges that practitioners experience in innovative processes, as well as the processes of learning and knowing while balancing the amount of persistence and change.

This dissertation brings together and contributes to three pillars of literature; creative industries research, practice based research and research on project-based organization.

Contributions to research on creative industries.

Transcending organization has in different ways been discussed within the creative industries literature. These studies have looked into various forms of transcending organization that organize whole industries which are organized primarily in terms of temporary systems. However, these theories have until now not been systematized and framed into a debate. This dissertation contributes to the literature on transcending organization in creative industries in two different ways. First, it provides a literature review of the different theories on the creative industries that have highlighted the transcending organizational aspect that organizes work and employment within these fields. Summing up this literature I point out, and in the dissertation to greater or lesser degrees investigates eight forms in which transcending organization takes or manifests itself in organizing work and employment in creative industries: 1) networks, 2) enduring collaborations, 3) skills and knowledge, 4) categories such as genres, types, status and standards; 5) norms, roles and hierarchies, 6) swift trust, 7) careers, and last but not least, 8) aesthetics. These findings connect and nuance the theories on transcending organizations, latent organizations and network organizations (Eikhof, 2010; Starkey et al, 2000; Blair, 2001) by adding on new aspects that specify and elaborate these theoretically developed concepts.

Second, this dissertation contributes to the creative industries research by providing new empirical insights into aesthetics in transcending organization. This is not an entirely new debate as it has been touched upon in different ways in prior research (Becker, 1982; Hennion, 1989, 2004; Halida, 2015; Bielby, Moloney & Ngo, 2005; Lena & Pachucki, 2013; Lena & Lindeman, 2014; Lena, 2004, 2009,

2012). These theories have, each in their own way, recognized and theorized aesthetics in transcending organization of art worlds. The findings of this dissertation adds directly to the debate about how artists and art worlds are created and changed through aesthetic judgements and defining and violating aesthetic boundaries (Becker, 1982; Lena & Pachucki, 2013; Lena, 2004, 2012; Lena & Lindeman, 2014). This work operates on an institutional level and provides limited empirical insights into how aesthetics are practiced by artists. This dissertation adds empirical flesh to the theoretical bones of aesthetics in creative industries. Although many of the studies on creative industries have centered on innovation and change in aesthetic categories within creative industries, they tend not to look at the work practices of the practitioners, and usually lack ethnographic data (Jones et al. 2012; Rao, Monin & Durand, 2005, Becker, 1982; Lena, 2004, 2012; Lena & Lindeman, 2014; Svejenova, Mazza & Plannelas 2007; Jones et al, 2012). The last of the three empirical papers in this dissertation adds important contributions to these debates. Through an in-depth study, it shows how transcending aesthetic boundaries effect work practices, i.e. in the form of tensions this creates. In creative industries, where the aesthetic product is developed within projects that in an accretive manner constitute the overall identity of the permanent organization, many tensions appear when challenging aesthetics (Stjerne & Svejenova, 2016). The reason for this is mainly that aesthetics are embedded in practices and challenging aesthetics implies challenging the embodied knowledge of practitioners, the one thing that allows them to judge and perform their work. This was illustrated in the case of the film production *Antboy* that attempted to merge two genres.

Another group of scholars center more specifically on the organizing of employment relationships in creative industries as a result of their project based nature. Employment relationships of a temporary nature entail 'less strings

attached' between the employer and employee. While everyone knows that the current relationship is ending at a specific time, many scholars became interested in understanding what upholds these employment relations when traditional employee-employer incentives (Haunschild, 2003, 2004) are lacking. This was explained through the fact that people behave well and live up to role expectations (Bechky, 2006) with the incentives of protecting reputation in networks enabling future job opportunities (Ebbers & Wijnberg, 2009) which in turn also results in swift trust (Meyerson et al, 1996). Creative careers are to a large extent outcomes of transcending organization and in the case of the film industry aesthetics and temporality are essential parts of what organize peoples' careers. As the literature review showed, other manifestations of transcending organization in creative industries influence career outcomes such as semi-permanent work groups (Blair, 2003) networks (Blair, 2001, Jones 1996) skills and competencies (Grugulis & Stoyanova, 2011) aesthetic judgement providing boundaries (Becker, 1982; Lena, 2013) and the aesthetics as part of the practices e.g. selection practices and work practices. This is what organizes workers into jobs and hence provides more detailed explanations for how careers develop. This dissertation adds on the aesthetics residing in practices as an additional organizer of employment. It provides an order for judgements that effects who gets the job, how people are evaluated on the job, and how careers are made.

Contributions to social practice theories

The second area of contributions is to practice theory. This dissertation has four unique contributions to this field of study, expanding understandings of practices in the following ways: 1) it elaborates and develops our understanding of transition in practice based studies, 2) it adds new empirical insights into the matters of changes of practices and the agency of practitioners, 3) it elaborates the study of aesthetics in practice based studies, and 4) it has a methodological

contribution to how to conduct a practice based study, especially with a focus on aesthetics.

The first contribution to the practice theory is an empirical contribution that expands the current knowledge about how transition takes place from a practice perspective. As discussed above, these findings show how taste is shared, negotiated and changed. These findings point out that taste changes over time, sometimes decoupled from the actions of reenacting the practices. It provides reflexive and negotiated projections of a future transition of the practice and through this image the transition is already initiated. If the leap between current knowledge residing in the current practices differs too much from the image, it can then be difficult to learn and continue practicing with the knowledge available. This links the knowledge and learning of practitioners to the social practices and transition of those.

The second contribution to practice theory from this study is that it empirically adds insights to how practices change and the role of practitioner agency in this change. The third paper in this dissertation shows how practitioners have agency and can decide to change practices. In creative industries they are even expected to as a result of innovation being expected (Banks, 2007). The tensions experienced by practitioners who need to learn while developing new practices according to a vision of bridging two distinct practices and the adherent knowledge in each of them is explored in the third paper (Stjerne & Svejenova, 2016). The contribution is hence that when practitioners decide to refine, change or discard practices, tensions and challenges appear in the becoming of new challenges – a situation that requires practitioners to balance between drawing on knowledge (that naturally belongs to the discarded old practice) and learning while developing new practices. This debate was opened up recently within practice theory by Gherardi (2015) wherein she explains the relation between learning and knowledge using an

example of a rock climber (Hennion, 2007). The rock climber is informed by the practice of climbing in general, allowing the practitioner to interpret and see the rock as a setting for climbing, using the right vocabulary and seeing rope, quickdraws, carabiners and stones as tools and handles. While climbing, learning happens about the specific rock, which at one and the same time reenacts the practice while learning happens. Gherardi's 2009 paper was a theoretical paper. This dissertation provides empirical insights into these processes and expands our understanding of transition of practices. In situations where the span between knowledge and the desire to learn and develop practices becomes too big, practitioners residing in the knowledge they have and remain unsatisfied. The findings in paper three show the tensions, boundary work, attachments, and detachments that happen when practitioners need to navigate in and between creative projects that excessively stretch current ways of practicing, demanding another relation between learning and knowing than what is described in the example of climbing (Gherardi, 2015).

The third contribution to practice theory empirically further explores taste-making in the setting of the film industry. Gherardi (2009, 2012) has emphasized the essence of emotions and aesthetics in practices, a perspective that this dissertation concurs with. Aesthetics was reintroduced to contemporary practice based studies in 2009 by Gherardi. Since then a relatively sparse body of empirical contributions on aesthetics in practice based studies has been made in organization and management studies. This dissertation provides a taste-making perspective applied to an in-depth ethnographic study of aesthetics embedded in individuals in creative industries.

The fourth contribution to the practice based theories is that it develops and tries out a methodological design for conducting a practice based study by following the project as a center for observing various practices coming together in the

project. Furthermore, it explores the challenges of observing aesthetics as an outsider and employed solutions and reflections to this process.

Contributions to the literature on project based organizations

The final and third pillar of research that this dissertation draws on and contributes to is research on project based organizations. The knowledge accumulated in this dissertation contributes to the literature on project based organizations in three ways. First, it contributes to further understanding the temporary – permanent tension that exist in these organizations. This is done by offering insights into the case of the film industry that provides an extreme case of project based organizing. This case sheds light on what provides order and stability to work in project based organizations and shows that work and employment become organized through industry practices that transcend firms within this industry. As a recurring theme within this literature is the relational aspect that provides order to work (Blair, 2003) and learning and knowledge (Graber, 2004; Sydow, Lindkvist, Defillippi, 2004).

This dissertation supports and extends the claim made by Manning & Sydow (2007) that in project based systems where temporaryness is predominant to stability when taking the organization as unit of analysis, order and stability is organized on a field level. They point out that creative labor processes are embedded in structures beyond the firm. This dissertation's findings extend this research by taking on a practice based approach that connects the micro and the macro explanations to what is being practiced in different settings wherein the social practices are reenacted and changed. Furthermore, it links different aspects of what practices organize work and employment by shedding light on the everyday practices performed in projects embedded in transcending organization.

The second contribution is to the organizing of employment in project based industries, empirically contributing to the call for further research on “the way labor markets are structured around ‘employability’ and ‘qualification’ is reconstructed in project based industries” (Manning & Sydow (2007: 39). The reason for this is what Manning and Sydow (2007) label as ‘network based control’ which implies that because of the temporary nature of project based industries, the organization and power that organizes who gets the job, what films gets made and by whom and who gets to develop what competencies, resides in the strong relational ties between people in the industry. The findings of dissertation extend these findings by diverting the focus from networks to transcending organization. By that it expands the understanding from merely focusing on the power of network relations to unfolding the practices of how work is informed by transcending organization and how employment is organized through these practices. The empirical findings of this dissertation explore a series of film projects that show how other projects, relations, industry norms and expectations for reemployment on sequels are embedded in practices. They furthermore show what happens when projects defy industry practices and the tensions this creates. Furthermore, this study has initiated an unfolding of the black boxed transcending organizing of employment and qualifications in project based organizations. These findings provide an essential contribution by showing how people are selected in practice and elaborates on who gets the job and who doesn’t. Furthermore, and aligned to this, it explores how skills and talent is developed and constructed. The other side of this is how creative workers select projects, why they stay, what they learn, and who they collaborate with over time – relationships based on aesthetics embedded in the practices and experienced through taste.

The findings of this dissertation also have implications for understanding how HRM functions in project based organizations. HRM has classically developed around long term employment relationships. The HRM role in traditional companies is hence to strategically recruit, develop, retain and dismiss human resources in longer term employment relationships. In project based organizations the lack of permanency often implies a lack of formalized HRM and the question then becomes by what means and how are employment relationships and work then organized? Despite prior contributions on these matters regarding the challenges that appear for HRM in project based organizations (see for example Bredin & Søderlund, 2011; Bredin, 2008; Huemanna, Keegan, Turner & More, 2007) this dissertation extends this knowledge by showing how work and employment is organized in terms of transcending organization.

Contributions to practitioners and implications

The findings of this dissertation have three overall contributions to practitioners in: 1) creative industries, 2) project based organizations, 3) traditional organizations in the new economy, and 4) policy-makers.

To the practitioners in creative industries this research informs creative workers about the aesthetic transcending organization that provides order for their work, learning opportunities, and careers. This insight could be useful as creative workers often perceive their careers as an outcome of serendipity or luck (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2012) and lack insights into the underlying mechanisms and transcending organization embedded in practices that influence career outcomes. These insights can be useful and help creative workers navigate their work worlds. Managers can use the knowledge from this dissertation to understand the transcending structures that organize work and employment. These structures are now to a larger extent out of their control, but by knowing more about them and obtaining a vocabulary to talk about them, they can become better able to manage

within and between them, e.g. on the influence of aesthetics on project identities and their relation to the identity of the permanent organization.

To practitioners in project based organizations, the findings of this dissertation provide essential insight on a more general level about the formation of project teams and their relation to the more permanent organization and the field in which it is embedded. Not least, the findings show that aesthetics organize work and employment on an industry level. This has implications for managers, as they should start reflecting on the aesthetics of the project managers they select. Project managers are the ones driving the project and function as a vantage point for the aesthetics of the rest of the team and product. Despite never being able to fully know what a creative project will become, reflections on the transcending organization that organizes industry knowledge is important in order for companies and projects to strategically position themselves and play with the aesthetic boundaries between different communities of practices. In relation to understanding how work and employment is organized, this dissertation provides important insights on HRM mechanisms on an industry level which can hopefully help managers reflect, talk about and navigate better in this matter, by providing insights that help to nurture, develop, and reattach talent and knowledge over time, building and drawing on permanency in a project based structure. Since human resources are the main asset for developing and driving successful projects and hence also survival of project based organizations, knowing how to manage these is essential.

To the practitioners in traditional firms within the new economy, this study contributes to further knowledge on how to navigate in an economy where temporariness is now a challenge that managers need to operate in. Traditional employment is changing with increasing use of network organizations and resultantly shorter term employment periods. This implies that traditional

organizations will face increasing problems providing permanency in work practices and the culture of the firm – similar issues to those pointed out in project based organizations. High employee turn-over rates mean an increasing importance of drawing on skills developed elsewhere than by or within the given firm itself. This implies that much normative, cultural and aesthetic knowledge embedded in practices of the firm becomes threatened by demolition and replaced by industry practices or those following occupations. This is why understanding the aesthetics in transcending organization becomes of increasing importance for managers to think about both with regard to recruitment and partnering strategies. Short term employment makes it difficult for firms to influence and control employees to conform to the firms’ norms, ethics, and aesthetics through the usual management tools. Workers know that they will be on to the next company in few months or years and the traditional ‘organizational man’ is a dying race. The aesthetics, values and norms to follow in this matter are industry norms. This challenges the competitive advantage of the single firm. This dissertation has implications for understanding the situation of managerial challenges in the new economy. This raises questions as to what organizations can do? The findings of this dissertation points to the importance of rethinking recruitment and selection, careers, human resource development, and retention in relation according to the transcending organization in the new economy.

Furthermore, this knowledge could hopefully influence the way policy-makers think about ‘employability,’ ‘employment,’ and ‘qualifications’ as they are differently organized in project based organizations and hence need other structures and labor market systems to support them. If project based organizing is an increasing tendency in the new economy, then labor market models might need to be rethought and reorganized to better support workers and companies in the new challenges with industry based transcending organization.

Limitations of the study and avenues for further research

This study draws on a data material containing both interviews and ethnographic data conducted from 2009-2015 which has provided longitudinal insights into different processes and people, work and employment over time, allowing me to understanding the changes happening as well as the connectedness between people, projects, and firms. Like any other study this research has some limitations that invite for further research. As with any selection of theory, methods, write ups, analysis etc. a researcher makes during the research journey this also implies many deselections and some limitations of the findings. For this dissertation the following limitations can be mentioned.

First to mention are the limitations as a result of methodological choices. In this I will mention that despite multi-sitedness, and initial insight into the social life in the film industry, the last part of this study was limited to workplaces. Since much is organized in spare time when people get ideas, go to the cinema, initiate collaborations and new projects, these sights would be of great interest to investigate further in future studies. Another limitation in relation to methodology was that the ethnographic study was limited to the preproduction of the second *Antboy* movie, the rest of the material were post-hoc accounts of what happened. Preproduction is where people have time to reflect and discuss things about work and evaluate and assemble the team. This is why this stage of production gives important insights into evaluation and aesthetic organizing of employment. However, understanding the organizing of work would be strengthened by following the project through all its phases. Furthermore a limitation goes for which and how many projects I followed and for how long I followed them, which was more or less based on timing, network, coincidence, and good will of people in the industry. I primarily followed *Antboy* which is not a typical film production in relation to how employment is organized, because it is a sequel. Being a sequel influences and adds a tendency towards recurrence in the employment relations

and as well to how work is practiced. Every project is unique in its own way, and in order to better understand transcending organization, further analyses should be made on different project based industries.

Because large parts of this study are based on interviews, yet taking on a practice based perspective, the validity of the findings depends on how descriptive and close to ‘what happened’ people were able to remember and communicate about their practicing. This was intended to be solved in the second vantage point of ethnographic studies of selected projects in different production companies. However, I was limited in not being part of the practices myself and hence didn’t learn to become a practitioner. As a result, it was difficult to observe and meaningfully make sense of aesthetics in practices, especially aesthetic judgements. However, hearing discussions between people about aesthetics on a daily basis provided essential yet limited insights. We still lack methods for solving these methodological problems, not least within the practice based research that includes aesthetics but does not provide much methodological support in these matters.

Secondly, the limitations follow from decisions about selecting codes to draw out and frame into a paper and which ones to leave for future research. Aesthetics was more dominant at work than, for example materiality, because in observing preproduction where aesthetics are discussed primarily in terms of references, and aesthetics only slowly towards the end of this stage become definitively materialized. These insights are important avenues for further research as we need to know more about how the relation between materiality and aesthetics influences the transcending organizing of work and employment – especially when seeking to understand the gap between imagined taste and the ability to express this with tools through materials.

Thirdly the findings of this study primarily center on aesthetics as transcending organization in the film industry. While I recognize that aesthetics is only one of many aspects of transcending organization and both other norms and professional skills exist in my material but was purposely downplayed in the analysis. Not least in the third paper aesthetics was a result of the review process downplayed along the way and other aspects such as temporality put in the forefront. As a result of my strong focus on aesthetics in this dissertation, more nuanced analysis that also include materials would greatly contribute to further understanding the transcending organization of work and employment in temporary systems. As a result of having only one case, the Danish film industry, the role of aesthetics can be difficult to transfer to other industries whose products are not by nature directly aesthetic. Transcending organization is context specific and in order to provide more insight into transcending organization, future research on other industries would strengthen this research. A comparative study might be interesting in order to see if aesthetics as transcending organization only apply to creative industries. Furthermore, project based organizations also differ e.g. between those which have set and stable roles and those using flexible and adaptable roles (Whitley, 2006). This study however provides one in-depth case of the Danish film industry and explores in a non-exhaustive manner different subthemes that show how work and employment is organized through aesthetic transcending organization. To what extent these findings can be generalized to other industries is not for me to judge. It is an empirical question that depends on resonance in knowledge and usability of the study judged by readers embedded in other practices and contexts. Finally it is worth noting that this is a compilation dissertation based on primarily on three articles/book chapters. This has certain limitations but also opportunities for the research process as well as the writing up of data. The paper based dissertation provides more minor distinctive contributions compared to the

monography that allows for only one in-depth unfolding of a research issue. In the paper based dissertation the papers may differ greatly as they are typically submitted to different journals and even special issues with a more narrow research focus. Also the writing up of the papers and unfolding of data in the analysis becomes limited by the article/chapter format, not least for ethnographic data. It can however be argued that what this format lacks in empirical descriptive depth it compensates for by providing a great learning opportunity by co-authoring and by the learning by practicing in collaboration with academic professionals. I would also argue that the paper based format invites a creative process of making sense about the connections between the papers as they divert into different directions over time. It is indeed a challenging and exciting learning experience!

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Appendices

Appendix A: The locations of my research

Appendix room⁷



A1: The Antboy producers'

⁷ Picture taken by me september 2013

Appendix A2: The basement: 1st ad, assistants and line producer's room ⁸



Appendix designer, room ⁹



A3: The basement: production property masters and costume

⁸ Picture taken by me end January 2014

⁹ Picture taken by me January 2014. In the picture you see some of the mood boards and visualizations of the movie. It provides colour codes and moods that is intended to guide the film practitioners.

Appendix A4: Antboy Test day- production of special effects¹⁰



Appendix A5: Nimbus Film- The house, Frederiksberg, Denmark¹¹



¹⁰ Pictures taken by me 24 October 2013, at the Tests day in studie500 i Tv-City (production location), Søborg, Denmark. In the first picture is the director Ask Hasselbalch and in the background one of the main characters in the movies, Amalie. They are running tests prior to the real production, experimenting with how to visualize a girl becoming invisible.

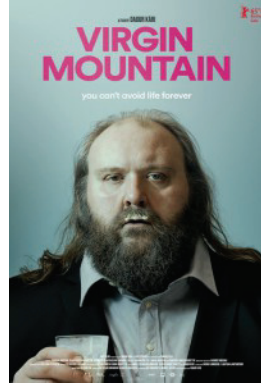
¹¹ Picture retrieved from the internet July 2016

Appendix A6: Nimbus film- the dining room¹²



¹² Picture taken by me at Nimbus Film. October 2014. We were celebrating that the DFI application was submitted. Its unusual to celebrate this but we decided to celebrate it anyways.

Appendix A7: Nimbus film other simultaneously produced projects¹³



¹³ Pictures retrieved from Nimbus Films homepage July 2016

Appendix A8: The Danish film Institute (DFI)¹⁴



Appendix A9: Pre-premier Antboy¹⁵



¹⁴ Picture retrieved from the internet July 2016.

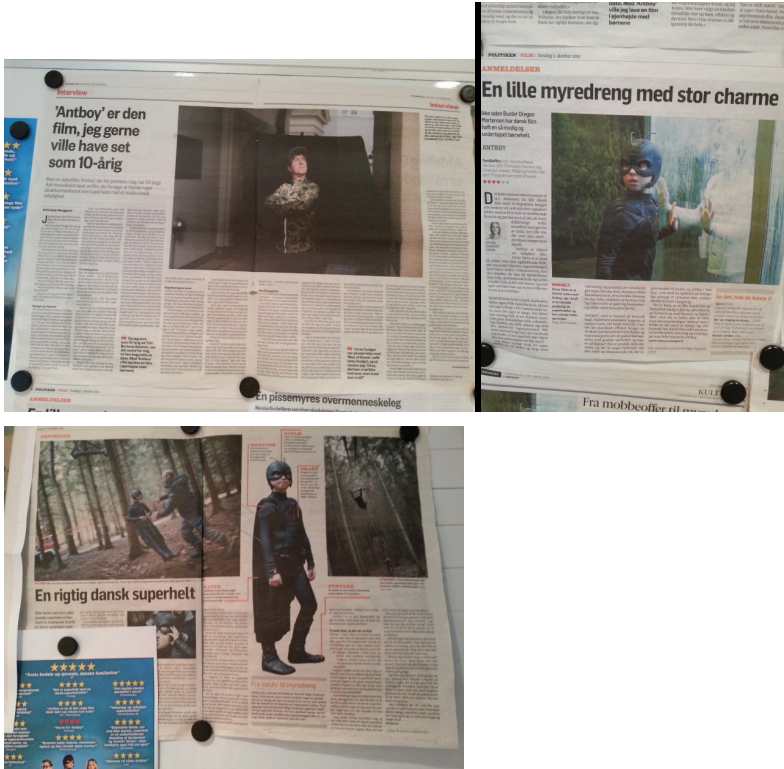
¹⁵ Found through the Antboy Facebook page

Appendix A10: Antboy Award ceremony¹⁶



¹⁶ Found through a search on the internet- also posted on the Antboy page on Facebook.

Appendix A11: Film critics' comments from the press¹⁷



¹⁷ Picture I took with my camera of new paper articles posted on a wall at Nimbus Film.

Appendix A12: Film Projects I followed from 2013-2015¹⁸



¹⁸ Sources retrieved from an internet search (accessed 20 July 2016)

Appendix B: List of Interviews

2009-2011	2009	2013-2014	2013-2014	2013-2014	2014
40 interviews	Socially involved in the field from September- December 2009 the social non- film making part of the film industry	Ethnography midi August to end February + interviews about the production of Antboy and projects in the house (Nimbus)	15 Career narratives at Nimbus- head functions on the production Antboy	DFI consultants – career narratives with an emphasis on taste and evaluation. – their practices of selection and evaluation	March 2 weeks of production 1 week in Denmark 1 week in Germany

List of Interviews 2013-2015

- I. Informants from the permanent organization: Nimbus Film
 1. CEO, Owner, and Co-founder; Executive Producer (Antboy I, II, III): Birgitte Hald. Mar 21, 2014; Sep 4, 2015
 2. Company Executive, Owner and Co-founder; Executive Producer: Bo Ehrhardt. Sep 9, 2015
 3. Reader at Nimbus: Thilde Dalby. Jan 8, 2014
 4. Producer at Nimbus; (Antboy I, II): Eva Jakobsen (together with Lea Løbger). Nov 6th 2013
 5. Producer at Nimbus; Line Producer (Antboy I); Producer and Line Producer (Antboy II); Producer (Antboy III): Lea Løbger. Nov 6, 2013; Sep 4, 2015
 6. Producer at Nimbus: Lars Bredo Rahbæk. Oct 22, 2013
 7. Producer at Nimbus: Mikkel Jersin. Sep 18, 2013
 8. Producer Assistant at Nimbus (Antboy I, II, III): Janne Nygaard. Sep 9, 2015
 9. Stagier: Anonymous. Nov 5, 2013

- II. Informants from temporary organizations: Antboy, Original Film and Sequels
 10. Director (Antboy I, II, III): Ask Hasselbalch. Aug 22, 2013; Oct 16, 2013
 11. Writer (Antboy I, II, III): Anders Ølholm. Dec 16, 2013
 12. Cinematographer (Antboy I, II, III): Niels Reedtz Johansen. Sep 28, 2015
 13. Line Producer (Antboy II): Carina Åkerlund. Nov 4, 2013; Nov 26, 2013
 14. Costume Designer (Antboy I, II III): Louize Nissen. Jan 15, 2014
 15. Production Designer; Art Department Director (Antboy II, III): Sabine Hviid. Jan 9, 2014

III. Informants from the field: Expert and other professionals

- 16.DFI Consultant (Other Art House films): Steen Bille. Dec 9, 2013
- 17.DFI Consultant (Children films, incl. Antboy): Rasmus Horskjær. Jan 13, 2014
- 18.DFI Consultant (Other Art House films): Kim Leona. Aug 14, 2013
- 19.CEO, Founder; Executive Producer at Fridthjof Film: Ronnie Fridthjof. Aug 13, 2013
- 20.CEO, Founder; Executive Producer at Grasten Film: Regnar Grasten. Sept 12, 2013
- 21.Director and Cinematographer: Vibeke Winding. May 16, 2013
- 22.Researcher at Nimbus in 2007: Per Darmer. April 25, 2014

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