



TECHNOLOGY IN THE PERFORMING ARTS: A Study on Organisational Identity and Change



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Abstract

The purpose of this research is to analyse the effects that the implementation of new technologies can have in the performing arts. By conducting an instrumental case study of a contemporary dance company based in Copenhagen, the Danish Dance Theatre, we were able to get insights on how the employees understand the effects of Artificial Intelligence implementation on Organisational Identity and Organisational Change. By interviewing both administrative and artistic members of the Danish Dance Theatre, employed on a permanent basis, we were able to gather data on their understanding and their perceptions on Organisational Identity and Organisational Change.

Our main findings outline that members identify the new Artistic Director as the initiator of the changes the company is currently facing. Therefore, participants do not consider technology as the driver of change, but as part of the new artistic vision, having direct effects on the company's Organisational Identity. In the context of Organisational Change, our findings evidence how change in the organisation was also driven by the change of leadership, leading to a necessity of redefinition of roles among the company to increase efficiency. Employees did not experience important changes in their tasks and routines due to the implementation of new technologies with the exception of the dancers. Due to the global pandemic the *Centaur* production had to stop in the middle of the creative process, making impossible for participants to predict future changes.

Our findings highlight the difficulties the company is encountering in terms of knowledge management and knowledge loss. Additionally, the Artistic Director takes on the role of knowledge broker, with most of the information and knowledge passing on through his position. Our suggestions for the Danish Dance Theatre are based on the results obtained, considering the timely and monetary restrictions of the company.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Personal Motivation

Our personal interest in the creative sector has led us to explore the following research into Artificial Intelligence and its future applications in this field. Not only from a managerial and an academic point of view, but our passion and our interest in the overall dynamics around creativity and technology has led us to this case study. This interest is solidified in our shared cultural and artistic oriented background. During our master programme we have been able to acquire even more knowledge and interest in the creative field, and moreover, gaining a wealth of insights regarding the latest innovations concerning this field.

The case study we choose focuses on a contemporary dance company (Danish Dance Theatre) which is aiming to introduce a highly innovative production on stage. Indeed, this production has been of interest to us, not only due to the technology usage, but because its intent is to raise awareness about Artificial Intelligence technology in society through arts. As a matter of fact, what drove our research's motivation was the purpose to understand more in depth what kind of relationship there will be among humans and machines and which ethical questions can be asked. What inspired us to investigate the implication of the implementation of new technologies in the creative industry is the dilemma connected to humans and machines. Can machines be considered as artists on their own? Can they be more creative than humans? Does this imply that human creativity is limited and hence not original?

Being fascinated by arts, movies, theatre, dance and music, and living in a very fast-evolving society, requires the ability to read reality, observe events critically, and understand boundaries. In truth, we believe it is important that culture reflects society, its weakness and strengths, and that stimulates people's reflection. The binomial human vs machine has been the object of many discussions: if Artificial Intelligence (AI) can match our intelligence, our emotions or decision-making process and if it can overcome human expectations, creating something that artists would not be able to imagine or create themselves. There is probably not a straight answer, but it certainly concerns our future, and it can be an important innovation that must be understood and used.

1.2 The Case

When choosing the instrumental case study (Stake, 2000), several different options and projects had been taken into consideration. After careful thought, the case hereby presented in the thesis is a Danish contemporary dance company, the Danish Dance Theatre (in Danish, Dansk Danseteatre). This is a small sized company, but nevertheless it has an international background and international employees. It has the reputation of being innovative and this orientation is something we considered important, because it means employees are aware of possible innovations in the field and they embrace them. In Denmark it is the largest dance company with important partnerships such as the Royal Danish Theatre and it is therefore well recognised. The Danish Dance Theatre (DDT) is funded by the Ministry of Culture and the Danish Arts Council's International Performing Arts Exchange as well as some private foundations (Danish Dance Theatre, 2020).

Our intention is to conduct this research on a Danish institution because of the simplicity of observing and collecting data, as well as Denmark's reputation when it comes to innovations in the artistic field. During our master studies we developed a high familiarity and consciousness of the industry in the Nordic countries, that has enabled us to approach our research with an appropriate background knowledge. Recently, this company has been subjected to different changes under an organisational perspective, as they have changed Artistic Director. In 2018 Tim Rushton, the former Artistic Director, left the company leaving the lead to Pontus Lidberg. *Centaur* is the first production entirely curated by Lidberg and has caught our attention due to its implementation and usage of AI technology. The use of this complex technology in their performances represents a novel and innovative element for the company.

1.3 Original Intention

Our original idea was to pursue an ethnographic study taking place in this particular field with the purpose of exploring the processes involved in the production of *Centaur*, the innovative dance performance staged by Danish Dance Theatre. However, we decided to refocus our research on the Danish Dance Theatre company for the following reasons and necessities, explained below.

From a technical point of view, the *Centaur*'s idea was to bring on stage multiple algorithms involved with speech recognition as well as tracking dancers movements. The artistic concept was to match a dancing body without a voice with an algorithm provided with a voice but not with a physicality. What is peculiar of this production is the fact that dancers act in order to trigger the AI and the AI exists on the stage to shape the performance, which will be different each time. Moreover, as the choreographer is the acclaimed Pontus Lidberg, we expected an innovative and quality production. The two artists Cecilie Waagner Falkenstrøm and Ryoji Ikeda have also contributed to the production as external experts. Lastly, the development of the project is being followed by important partners such as the NYU and Center for Ballet and Arts.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, the production had to be stopped in the middle of the creative process. As a consequence, we have been unable to conduct our fieldwork as originally planned. Observation should have contributed to improve and enrich our research as our original idea was to support the employees of the Danish Dance Theatre for all the duration of the production *Centaur* for a total of 5 weeks to gather data from participant observation. By participating in their activities we would have been able to understand their code and to assign meaning to their actions, ceremonies and rituals (Gobo, 2011), take daily notes and transcribe every night after the time spent at the office.

Due to the impossibility of conducting fieldwork we decided to rethink our research problem, which was best examined using a phenomenological approach. A phenomenological study investigates how several individuals assign meaning to a concept or a phenomenon based on their lived experiences (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, our research, differing from our original intention, focuses on “what” the interviewees experienced and “how” they experienced it (Moustakas, 1994). By the means of interviews conducted with the employees of the Danish Dance Theatre, we were able to arrive at a broader and more profound understanding of the implications caused by the implementation of new technologies in performing arts. We were in fact able to develop a description of the “essence of the experience for all the individuals” (Creswell, 2013, pp. 59) that enabled us to get an understanding on the underlying research phenomenon.

1.4 Problem Formulation

The paper aims to investigate the changes that the cultural industries are currently facing as a result of the digitalisation that is characterising the creative field, in order to remain competitive on the market. The case, hereby presented, is integrating digitalization and highly innovative technologies in the creative process. The research goal is to analyse the effects that technological novelties have on the organisational identity as well as on organisational structure. Specifically, we aim at understanding the organisational changes initiated by technological implementation.

Though literature has investigated the relation between some environmental changes and effects on the organisational identity and their strategic decisions (Ravasi & Shultz, 2006), our focus is oriented to deepen a specific aspect of these changes. Environmental changes could include political, market, managerial or technological changes. Our research will focus on the technological aspect, because it seems to be able to deliver to the cultural and artistic institutions (Jones, Svejenova, Strandgaard Pedersen, & Townley, 2016) an interesting social and business impact (Loebbecke; Picot, 2015). Indeed, the new digital technologies have changed the way people acquire information, interact and communicate, affecting deeply every aspect of our lives. This is also reflected in the business environment, as it is required adapting digital and technological tools to the production processes, in order to remain competitive and to engage the targeted consumers (Fenwick; McCahery; Vermeulen, 2019). Technological influences and implications can also be found in the creative field, leading to rapid impacts and changes (Stadgaard Pedersen et al., 2020)

1.5 Research Question

Because these changes faced by the cultural and artistic field involve the creative process that is at the core of these industries, we expect effects on organisational identity and structure to support its implementation. As these aspects of the company involve deeply employees and their perceptions, we decided to investigate their understanding of this concept. In fact, the employees of these institutions are those who can perceive the differences and the challenges that derive from this novelty first-hand.

The proposed question aims to reach a deeper knowledge of the cultural and creative industry during these times characterized by innovation and changes. The qualitative study will seek to explore the understanding of organisational members on the company identity and the changes caused by Artificial Intelligence (AI) implementation as well as the resulting organisational changes. In our research, we have considered and involved both the administrative and artistic members of the dance company. As such, the research question is as follows:

How do employees at the Danish Dance Theatre understand the effects of the implementation of new technologies on organisational identity and organisational change?

The understanding of the members' experiences will be beneficial for the Danish Dance Theatre (DDT) as it will enable a deeper understanding about hidden issues and features related to the phenomenon and leading to the development of new practices. The topics of organisational identity and organisational change will be deeply defined and discussed in the section of Theoretical Framework.

1.6 Delimitation of Study

This project aims to understand the employees' perception of innovation's effects on identity and change. We understand that the implementation of technology in the arts has a deep effect also on the audience and society, which are external factors of the company, but we decided to focus our research only on the internal part of the company which produces this performance. Nevertheless, conducting this research with this setting leads us to face employees' perception about the audience/society opinion and behaviours. Hence, we have referred to the DDT's members' understandings and beliefs on the matters under analysis. It is clear that this choice has as a result to give us information on just one side of this event, however, we consciously decided on it because of time and resources.

It would have been very interesting for us to analyse data from the audiences, nevertheless from the beginning (before the events caused by the COVID-19), we realized that conducting a qualitative research including the point of view of the audience would have required more time in order to interview the audiences using another method of data gathering. However, we are aware that

information could have been relevant and useful for the understanding of the effect of the usage of technology in the arts.

We would like to highlight the special conditions that the company is currently facing. In the first place, since 2018 the DDT is under the lead of Pontus Lidberg, after 16 years of Tim Rushton's directorship. Secondly, due to the global pandemic, the production *Centaur* was interrupted in the middle of the creative process.

1.7 Grand Challenge

In these past years, every single aspect of our daily life and communication process have been digitalized. In the last 20 years, in each industrial sector and in each one's life, technological components have become considerably incisive (Google was born in 1998 and Mobile phone at the beginning of 90's). In the last few years there has been an acceleration caused by the augmented computational power that we have today, therefore AI and Machine Learning have led to an even more deep revolution. Rapid technological development is shaping our present society and each new generation's relationship towards their outside world. This so-called "technological revolution", not only rewrites the conditions of human existence but can also reshape culture (Klein & Maury, 2008).

In our contemporary era, all fields of studies recognize the importance of technology in finding new solutions to improve business operations and to foster innovation (Court, 2007). This is also relevant for organizations in the creative industries, where there is a dependence on creative and innovative exploration to sustain organizational success (Knight & Harvey, 2015). Studies have shown that creative practices emerge and are shaped by the effects of heterogeneous elements, such human attributes and technologies, and its assemblage (Duff & Sumartojo, 2017). Indeed, cultural industries have a long historic relationship with innovations and technologies. As a matter of fact, cultural industries owe their ability to reach new frontiers, new targets and to grow to the technology innovations (Lampel et al. 2006). Nevertheless, in the past we have seen cases where art's field led to an innovation, for instance oil painting or Spotify (Pedersen 2020).

Due to these reasons, Dansk Danseteater is the chosen case: it has aimed to implement, throughout the duration of our study, a creative and cultural product through the usage of AI technology. This is

one example of innovation in the industries' field and of modernization of culture, caused by the need to communicate and interact with a contemporary society. These novelty tools effect culture and society in a way that they can change how people enjoy and approach them (Pallavicini, Ferrari, Pepe, Garcea, Zanacchi, Masera, Mantovani, 2017). Society and culture are strictly connected: society defines the meaning of culture while the cultural feature is what delineates a society (Villa, 2011). As a consequence, if one of those changes, the other one needs to reflect this evolution. Therefore, digital and technology not only can be used as powerful tools that open the doors to new possibilities, but their implementation is required in order to be able to address the modern audience.

Our case-study research aims to collect detailed descriptive knowledge on the organizational identity change caused by the implementation of new technologies. Moreover, we want to gain a deeper understanding on how new technology effects identity and creative processes. Lastly, we would like to understand the changes in labour division and team roles caused by the implementation of complex technology in the process.

1.8 Academic Conversation

The implications regarding the usage of new technologies in the creative process that cultural institutions are currently facing, we believe they are an under-researched topic at the moment. Though AI technologies such as Virtual Reality or Augmented Reality and Digital Communication are not entirely new per se, their application in the cultural world is only recently becoming popular. This is the case not only in creative fields which are more accustomed to innovative tools such as movies and music industries but in theatres, museums and design institutions as well (Lumos; Kargas; Varoutas, 2018). Their application has been very limited because of the expensiveness of these tools and because only the young part of society seemed to be engaged by them (Boldini, 2017). Slowly more and more people are amused by this new communication channel as an engager to get in contact with culture (Pallavicini, Ferrari, Pepe, Garcea, Zanacchi, Masera, Mantovani, 2017).

This topic has been mostly investigated from a psychological, technical, marketing and a cultural/historical point of view (Court, 2007; Saltz, 2001; Mandryk & Inkpen & Calvert, 2006). There are theoretical observations regarding technologized aspects of social and cultural life (H. Mackay, 1998). Therefore, our purpose is to bring more information on these technologized aspects

about the cultural and artistic sector with a case study. The effects of technology on identity and on organizational change have not been investigated deeply. For this reason, we would like to contribute to the academic conversation by focusing on the impact of technologies such as AI on the task distribution and division of labour during the internal creative process of the company, the relationship between the different team members and the changes in roles. Moreover, we would like to understand if the implementation of new technologies have had an impact on expectations, assumptions and beliefs internal to the organization and hence on its identity.

Our research aims to fill a gap in the existing literature. Our ambition is to aid in this research shortage and we expect the gathered data to further our understanding of the particular subject matter (Sandberg & Alvesson, 2011). Furthermore, through this report we want to contribute to solving a piece of a larger puzzle concerning the process behind cultural institutions, creative industries and their management dynamics (Knight & Harvey, 2015). In the creative industries the exploitation and exploration paradox has been observed: for long-term success, companies have to balance both of these aspects in their internal management life. On one hand, every business reality needs stability, implementation and efficiency, this requires reproduction of existing works and established processes. On the other hand, creativeness and innovation is based on discovery, invention and the exchange of knowledge beyond the daily business repetition. This paradox has always been present in this field and it defines the distinctiveness of this sector: business and creativeness, exploitation and exploration (Knight & Hervey 2015). Of course, due to the managerial and company orientation aspects involved, we want to research the possible consequences of balance between creativity and business on the identity of the company.

In the following pages the focus will be to discover how the modern cultural-creative institutions are internally organized. Hence, the interest is directed to their teams, their synergies and their creative process aiming at the project development, while technology and digitalization are becoming an important part of their realities both for the production and the work environment. Especially, this thesis is concerned with analysing the changes taking place in organisational identity, outsourcing and departments management.

1.9 Structure of the thesis

The structure of our thesis aims to present our findings and research as consistent as possible with the chosen method of data collection and representation. In order to understand the process of our research and then our conclusions, we chose to firstly present the Methodology and Methods section. This explains what type of case we have discussed, the formal methodological approach used, and the reasons for this choice and hence, the process we used to collect and analyse our data. Following this, the Theoretical Framework section will be presented, where the existing theories are outlined to provide a critical frame for our analysis. This section identifies the theories in literature that are subsequently going to explain and support our findings. Thereafter, the section showcasing our Findings explains taxonomically the main topics and challenges our interviews disclosed. The findings are exposed and structured following the coding tree approach (Gioia et al., 2012) in a narrative way. Finally, the Discussion and the Conclusion are presented, where our analysis connecting the Findings with the Theoretical Framework is discussed. This aims to give to the reader practical and formal reasoning for our conclusions. Lastly, our final section will shortly sum up the results and the theories of this research. Moreover, we will present some advice and possible problem solving originated by our research conduction.

2. Methodology and Methods

The following chapter focuses on the research approach and methods used for the purpose of this thesis. Our study aims at investigating the effects of the implementation of technology in the creative industries. With “creative industries” are meant those industries that are characterized by specific characteristics such as the *nobody knows effect* (Caves, 2000) which expresses the unpredictability of demand, the *art for art’s sake* (Caves, 2000) which indicates that employees are focused mainly on the originality, harmony and success of the creative goods, and to the fact that the goods are mostly of experiential kind (Caves, 2000). We have been focused on a specific subcategory of creative industry, the cultural one. “*Cultural industries are those that combine the creation, production and commercialization of contents which are intangible and cultural in nature*” as defined by UNESCO in Byrnes W. J.’s book (2015). This definition is already well comprehensive of all the different aspects that make it a unique industry. In fact, it focuses on both the economical aspect of these realities as well as the creative and cultural one. Similarly to other business realities, creative industries are also driven by technological innovations, remaining always connected to tradition and cultural heritage (Lampel et al. 2006: 12).

The reason why our work focuses on the relation between cultural industries and technology implementation is because this is an under-researched area in the academic world, but at the same time it is becoming a trend. In fact, more and more cultural organisations are using new technologies in different ways (Pedersen, 2020). Specifically, in the case of Danish Dance Theatre, the technology used is Artificial Intelligence (AI). An intelligent agent has been described as something that receives perceptions from external agents and can perform a consequential action (Russell & Norvig, 1995). Therefore, the hereby presented research focuses on the Artificial Intelligence “Umbrella” Technology. This is an “*area of computer science*” which focuses on developing machines and computer languages that can act and react as humans (Finke, 2018). It is called an “umbrella” technology because it embraces Augmented Reality, Virtual Reality, Robotics, Machine Learning and others (Bughin, Seong, Manyika, Chui, Joshi, 2018). The implementation of new technologies in the production creates challenges regarding how individuals and teams drive and ensure innovation (Jones, Svejnova, Pedersen, Townley, 2016).

Due to the economical and socio-cultural changes brought by technologies and their implementation, in this paper it has been studied the impact of the AI applications on the identity of the organisation.

According to Albert and Whetten (1985), organizational identity has three main features: organisational members see it as central, organisation identity is what makes organisation distinctive from others and it has an enduring element which links the past with the future of the organisation. Therefore, organizations should interrogate themselves on who they are and what their distinctive characteristic is. “Identity” is the result of both the values and internal qualities of an organisation but it is also the result of its relations with the external environment (Albert, Ashforth and Dutton, 2000). Moreover, *“Recent economic transformation, technological advances and globalization seem to continue to alter how organizations and individuals define and organize work [...]”* (Pedersen 2020, pp. 2).

For this very reason, this study aims to understand how members of the Danish Dance Theatre perceive and understand the organisational changes caused by AI implementation in the artistic production, along with the identity’s changes. Organisational changes are defined as job’s tasks, job’s partitions and approaches modifications inside the daily environment of the institution, often caused by external inputs (Cameron & Green, 2012).

The next paragraphs will disclose the formal methodological approaches used for the purpose of this research. First, we will highlight the overall methodology of our qualitative research we conducted. Second, a section on the analysis of the dance industry in Denmark and the presentation of the case study will be outlined. It will follow a description of the process we used to collect and analyse the gathered data.

2.1 Qualitative Method

As we want to investigate the Danish Dance Theatre members’ understanding of the consequences related to the implementation of new technologies, we decided to interview them. To do so, we conducted a qualitative study. Denzin and Lincon (2005) offer a generic definition of Qualitative research:

“Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretative, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, readings and memos to the sel. At this level, qualitative research involves an

interpretative, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them” (2005a., pp.3).

Qualitative research has the goal to approach the world to understand the perspectives of participants regarding the issue under study (Flick, 2007). By applying an interpretative approach, meaning is created by understanding and interpreting actions and interaction between the different actors (Miles & Huberman, 1994). To reach this goal, we interviewed both administrative and artistic members of Danish Dance Theatre, investigating their sense making of the themes hereby presented.

2.1.1 Overall Methodology

The overall methodology of this paper is aligned with the inductive process of research. The topic was approached inductively due to the focus of the paper, assessing the applicability of current theories on the effects of technology implementation in cultural institutions such as Danish Dance Theatre. The inductive thinking and inductive reasoning is reflected in the method used to carry out the study, as we moved from specific analysis about individual occurrences to broader generalizations and theories (Trochim, 2006). The theories were kept in the background with the purpose of allowing the data generating process to be as unbiased as possible. Since our approach is inductive, we did not attempt to theorize based on dissonances between the literature.

2.2 Case study research

In this section the Danish Dance Theatre case study will be outlined. First, an analysis of the Dance Industry in Denmark will be shown. Second, a presentation of the DDT regarding the company’s background and its organisational structure will follow.

2.2.1 Dance Industry in Denmark

Our research is based on an instrumental case study as we use it to shed light on the effects of new technologies on cultural institutions. An instrumental case study has a supportive role and facilitates our understanding on the issue. It serves the purpose to provide insights on the questions researched and to draw a generalization (Stake, 2000). Therefore, our attempt is to generalize from the case under study. As a matter of fact, we hope that this study can be useful for testing and generating theories

upon AI (or other technologies) implementation in artistic goods' creative process (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The case selection has been carried out in a strategic way, in order to gather the greatest possible amount of information on a specific phenomenon and to be able to generalise on the basis of the single case (Flyvbjerg, 2006).

The contemporary dance company, Danish Dance Theatre, is located in Copenhagen, an important cluster in the Nordic countries with a vibrant artistic scene. Copenhagen has a growing urban population of about 794,128 and can attract millions of tourists every year. This represents a *“concentration of people hungry for entertainment in many forms, and with diverse appetites”* (CISAC 2015, Cultural times, pp. 23). The demand for performing arts comes from a well-established dance tradition and appreciation of the arts in general. Copenhagen has for instance been home for drama, opera, ballet and concerts for many years.

The Royal Danish Ballet, for instance, dates of foundation goes back to 1748 (The Royal Danish Theatre, 2020). The Royal Danish Ballet is one of the world's best renowned ballet-companies. It was founded at Kongens Nytorv where it is still located today. It is a modern ballet-company with both Danish and international dancers. This old and well-known dance company has different collaborations in Denmark and around the world, bringing on stage different performances, sustaining artistic breakthroughs and innovations (The Royal Danish Theatre, 2020). Since 2008, the Artistic Director is Nikolaj Hübbe, who before performed as a dancer in the New York City Ballet. Probably, by virtue of akin professional backgrounds of the two Artistic Directors, Danish Dance Theatre and Royal Danish Ballet have shown a positive partnership, though the two are separate institutions, as mentioned in both companies websites.

This strong and deep-rooted ballet culture has been supported by education that has enabled the Danish population to develop artistic skills and artistic appreciation. The oldest ballet school of the country was established at the Royal Danish Theatre in 1771. This is why members of the audience are often connoisseurs of dance and performing arts, requiring a high quality of the performances. Therefore, standards in the city are very high making the Danish Dance Theatre a worldwide recognised company. The company is in fact regularly invited to perform abroad, participating in international events and theatres such as dance festivals and as part of theatrical seasons.

2.2.2 Company Background

The Danish Dance Theatre is the largest contemporary dance company in Denmark. Founded in 1981 by the English/Norwegian choreographer Randi Patterson, the company presents 70/80 performances a year, leading the contemporary dance scene in Denmark. With the vision “to push the borders of the perception of dance”, the performances offered by the Danish Dance Theatre aim at representing modern society and to speak to a broader audience by being innovative (Danish Dance Theatre, 2020).

From 2011 to 2018 the Artistic Director was Tim Rushton, who in April 2018 has left the lead to Pontus Lidberg. The new Artistic Director, well known for his ability to combine the classic background with a contemporary language, shifted the company into a new phase, a “new artistic era” (*Pontus Lidberg nuovo direttore del Danish Dance Theatre*, 2017). Lidberg has choreographed works for prestigious companies around the world as New York City Ballet, Les Ballets de Monte-Carlo, SemperOper Ballett Dresden, Martha Graham Dance Company, Ballet du Grand Théâtre of Ginevra, Royal Swedish Ballet, Royal Danish Ballet, Beijing Dance Theatre, BalletBoyz, Morphoses, as well as the Pontus Lidberg Dance, founded in Stockholm in 2003, now based in New York.

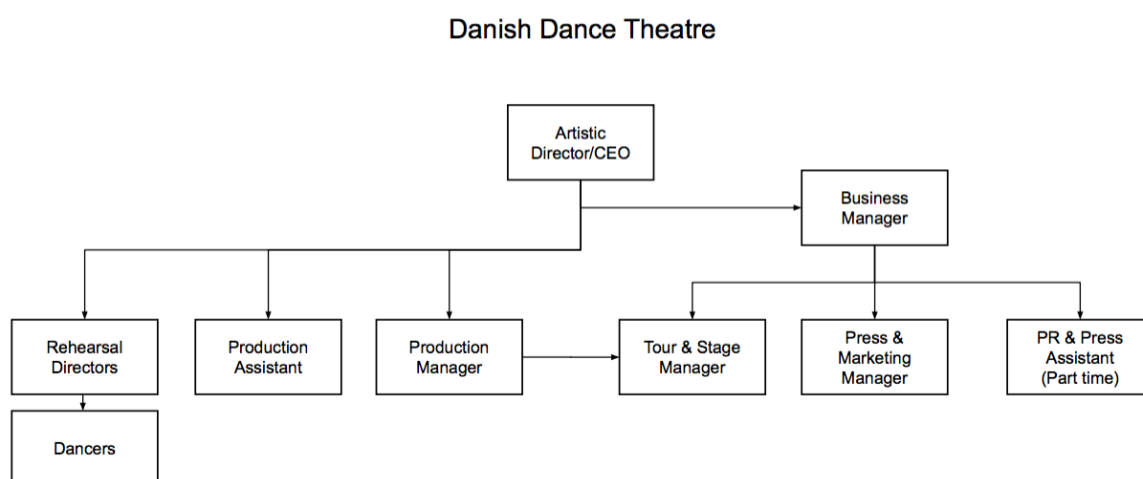
Danish Dance Theatre is funded by the Ministry of Culture and the Danish Arts Council’s International Performing Arts Exchange. In addition, individual performances receive support from private foundations (Danish Dance Theatre, 2020).

2.2.3 The Organizational Structure and Members

The Danish Dance Theatre consists of both an artistic and an administrative side. There are 21 full-time employees of which 8 administrative staff that are based in the offices at the Opera House and 13 dancers that work in the studio. At the top of the hierarchical pyramid there is the Artistic Director and CEO Pontus Lidberg who is responsible for both sides. In fact, not only is he the embodiment of the artistic vision of the company and the house choreographer, but under his lead there are administrative employees that have different administrative responsibilities.

With the support of the Business Manager the artistic vision is translated into a strategy, communicated and carried out by all other managers in charge of different departments. Other roles that can be found at the Danish Dance Theatre are the Production Manager and Production Assistant,

which also works closely to the Artistic Director being his Personal Assistant, as well as a Tour and a Stage Manager. Moreover, there are two employees that are responsible for communication and marketing that are the Marketing and Press Manager supported by a PR Assistant with a part-time position. Furthermore, the Danish Dance Theatre has also two Rehearsal Directors that work both as Maître de Ballet but are also involved in some administrative tasks such as rehearsal planning (Figure 2.1). Recently, the Danish Dance Theatre has also changed the Chairman of his Board, Uffe Savery, who was before the Music Director of the Symphony Orchestra *Copenhagen Phil*. The board member of the company has the role to oversee and ensure that mission and functions remain coherent. It also supervises the project's planning, the observation of the laws, and the financial aspect (Preston & Brown, 2004).



(Figure 2.1)

As a project-based organisation, it is typical for the Danish Dance Theatre to collaborate with different freelancers. Depending on the production, the company collaborates for short or longer periods of time with Guest Dancers and Choreographers, Technicians, Physiotherapists and different artists like Photographers, Video Makers, Costume Designers, Light Designers, Sound Designers, Composers, Musicians, Dramaturges, Teachers. The Company Model is a common approach for the production of dance performances. The purpose of a dance company is to bring together talented and like-minded artists which follow the same artistic vision led by the Artistic Director. On one hand, the Company Model is characterized by a rigid structure, a business-minded approach and consistency over time in genre and vision. On the other hand, a dance production company can be seen as a “temporary collectivity” of dancers and artists (DeFilippi et al., 1988). Their career is characterized by worldwide

opportunities and differently from other professions, their motivation and passion requires mobility. In fact the dance world is very fluid, bringing artists to perform at international levels in different venues around the world. As a matter of fact, dancers are not only active within the company, but are also involved in personal and independent projects. For this reason, the network is an important source of inspiration as the company gets access to external inputs and ideas that otherwise would have not reached. Thus, through the broadening of existing in-side-company skills, Danish Dance Theatre can be considered a project based company. Utterly, the company's existence is in the production of different performances, implementing knowledge sharing. This creates the opportunity to develop new capabilities and to exploit new resources, giving life to new collective unitary ideas and projects (R. Withely, 2006).

Danish Dance Theatre represented for us a good instrumental case study as they currently work on more innovative and avant-garde productions which also involve new technologies on stage. As we wanted to investigate the causes and effects of the artistic choices as well as understanding the organisational implication that this change might involve, the DDT represents a good opportunity for this purpose. As a matter of fact, their mission and vision orientation, their relatively small size and number of employees, along with the role they serve in the Danish dance scene, represent an interesting combination to study.

After having presented the case under study, the description of the procedure for collecting data will follow. The next section will explain the process we conducted to gather data focusing on the interview design.

2.3 Data collection

This section serves the purpose to describe the data collection used for this research. The data for this research has been obtained through the means of desk research and interviews. At the first stages of our work, desk research has been conducted. Background information on our case study has been found and analysed. This has included industry data, information on the history of the Danish Dance Theatre and responses of the critics on previous performances. Moreover, we interviewed key people with a certain level of responsibility and direct involvement in the daily operations both from the

administrative and artistic side. The next paragraph will provide more detail in regard to the Interview design, explaining the formal method used for collecting our data.

2.3.1 Interview design

We decided to design the interviews in a semi-structured way. For this reason, the questions were based on predetermined topics (Organisational Identity, Organisational Change, Project Management, Creative and Cultural Management, Technology). These allowed some room for the interviewee to digress in order to explore a topic, with the purpose of using the interviewee's expertise to guide the conversation into areas that might be relevant for our research (Barlow, 2010). As our goal was to learn from the participants, the questions asked were open-ended to permit the complexity of a single idea to emerge. Therefore, in order to cover the areas of our interest, we prepared an interview guide to support and guide us during the interview process (see Appendix).

We decided to adapt to the principle of the active interviewing style. According to Holstein and Gubrium (2011), the active interview takes a constructionist perspective. Interviewees, that represent the narrators or storytellers, together with the interviewers construct a story and its meaning. Moreover, the interviewee represents the source of knowledge that can be cultivated and interpreted together with the interviewer. This is in contrast with the traditional interviewing process, where the interviewee is in possession of subjective and/or objective truth that needs to be extracted by the interviewer (Gubrium & Holstein, 2001). For this reason, when conducting the interviews our role was to start a dialogue with the interviewee, reflecting on their words and creating meaning together. Depending on the different role of the interviewee inside the company, the conversation led us to different considerations and focuses, highlighting different perspectives on the same issues. As mentioned before, we decided to interview administrative staff as well as artistic members to get an overall perspective. We have anonymised the interviewees by referring to them only by the professional role. In the following Table, the list of interviewees together with their responsibilities are presented.

Table of interviewees:

<p>Artistic Director, CEO, Resident Choreographer</p> <p>He establishes the overarching artistic vision that the company will follow. He selects the artistic staff as well as guests choreographers based on the vision for the dance company. Moreover, he hires and manages the administrative employees.</p> <p>The Artistic Director is the bridge between the artistic and the administrative staff. Moreover, he reports to the Board of Directors regarding the planning of the seasons.</p> <p>As a Resident Choreographer, the responsibilities are to serve in residence with the company for a predetermined period of time.</p>
<p>Press and Marketing Manager</p> <p>The Marketing Director is responsible for the promotion of the dance company. He is involved in different activities such as external communication, press work, Social Media management and offline/online marketing.</p>
<p>Production Assistant</p> <p>As part of the Production of the company, she helps keeping the production on schedule and on budget. Her responsibilities involve as well being the personal assistant of the Artistic Director.</p>
<p>Dance Artists</p> <p>As Dancers their role is to interpret and perform the choreographies. Moreover, they are actively involved in the development and creation of the project together with the Choreographer.</p>
<p>Rehearsal Directors</p> <p>The Rehearsal Directors plan and schedule the rehearsals on behalf of the choreographer. Moreover, they support the dancers to get ready for the performance also ensuring the maintenance of their physical conditions. In fact, they help them finding injury treatments, physiotherapy or mental support.</p>
<p>Sound Designer</p> <p>As a sound designer the role involves the facilitation and technicalities involved with the sound needed for the production. These can vary depending on what is needed for a specific</p>

performance, as for example recording or editing original music, mixing audios, setting up sound system.

Stage Manager & Tour Director & Board Member

The Stage Manager has the responsibility the overall the performances. Specifically, he has the responsibility for to “call the show”, controlling the timing for lighting, sound scenery movements, projections and the entrances of dancers. Moreover, he is in charge of safety of performers and crew members.

As a Tour Director, his responsibilities are to plan and organize the logistic aspects of the tours around Denmark.

Finally, he is part of the Board of Directors as the representative of the employee.

2.4 Data analysis

After the interviews were conducted, they were transcribed so that they could be coded. This section will focus on the steps carried out in the coding process. Coding can be defined as the process of assignment of labels to specific pieces of the data collected, in which each label constitutes a theme or an idea (Miles, Huberman, Saladaña, 2013). The purpose of this categorization of data is to structure the information gathered by contemplating symbolic meanings and recurrent themes in order to perform a form of preliminary analysis (Miles et al., 2013). This clustering and display of similar data chunks, sets the stage for further analysis as it helps us reflect on how to interpret the data's meanings and to familiarise with the most relevant material (Miles et al., 2013).

Instead of using a purely inductive approach, for the process of coding we adopted what can be said to be the abductive approach. In qualitative research there could be three different reasoning approaches: deductive, inductive and abductive. While deductive tests existing theories, which are true in order to deduce logically certain conclusions, inductive and abductive conclusions are the derivation of a general principle from a specific observation and they are the most likely but not certain (Kovacs & Spens, 2005). As we decided to conduct an instrumental case study following an inductive process of research, we aim to generalize reasonably some theories regarding the understanding of new technology inside cultural organisations. Also, the abductive method starts from an empirical observation, hence from our findings, we were able to develop the coding tree from

the gathered material. What differentiates inductive from abductive and made us decide for this code method, is that abduction is feasible in the qualitative case study forming explanatory hypotheses from an analysis. It starts purely from analysis without previous theoretical frameworks (Flach & Kakas, 2000). For these very reasons, in order to make sense of the interviewees point of view, we decided to link our data to a theoretical framework afterwards, thus to deepen our knowledge pragmatically.

We adopted a multi-cyclic coding strategy as proposed by Miles, Huberman and Saladaña (2013), that comprehends a First and a Second Cycle of coding. The first cycle of coding has the goal to assign labels corresponding to summaries of different segments of data (Figure 2.2). These assigned labels are then analysed during the second cycle to find patterns of codes to categorise them together. In fact, the Second Cycle coding groups together the obtained First Cycle coding chunks into broader themes (Miles et al., 2013). This process of going back-and-forth and hence to analysing-and-theorising is at the basis of the so-called grounded theory, with a bottom-up perspective starting from the phenomena and practice to the theory and explanation. As a matter of fact, in this paper are considered phenomena, those perceptions and dynamics of the Danish Dance Theatre employees, in order to generate a wider understanding of cultural organisations. For this very reason we decided that the "bottom-up" approach is the most suitable. Thoroughly, it proposes to explicitly model for investigating behaviours, emerging from a micro level to a macro level and so giving the opportunity to generate global models (Åsvoll, 2014).

The first round of coding resulted in a list of 35 first-order codes, which included "Role of Art", "Role of DDT", "Art institution challenge" and "Public Funded" among others (see Figure 2.2). We then reduced the 35 first-order codes to 10 second-order codes, such as "Understanding of DDT Mission" or "Understanding of DDT Vision" (see Figure 2.2). The resulted second-order codes were then grouped into two themes by moving back and forth between data and theories: "Understanding of Identity and Identity change at DDT" and "How organizational change is perceived at DDT".

First Oder Code	Second Oder Code	Theme
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role of Art, Role of DDT, Art institution challenge. Public Funded, Future goals • Artistic Vision, Vision Challenges, Overlapping of Identity • Values, Size, Innovative, Contemporary • Creative, Process, Artistic, Director challenges, Dancers role, Network • New artistic director, Organisational Culture • AI, Impact of AI, Reasons for AI, Previous technologies • Background, Production role, Motivation, Technical department role, Role & Task & Responsibilities, Outsourcing • Project management, Project management challenges issues • Current problems, Internal communication • Restructuring of the organizational structure, Change frictions, Change of artistic directorship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of DDT mission • Understanding of DDT vision • Understanding of the elements that characterise the DDT • Understanding of Creative Process at DDT • Understanding of identity change • Understanding of Technology usage • Understanding of roles at DDT • DDT as a Project Management organization • Understanding of current challenges • DDT current changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of Identity and Identity change at DDT • How organizational change is perceived at DDT

(Figure 2.2)

Moreover, the grounded theory is the literature approach which considers theories as a following process of the data collection (Flach & Kakas, 2000). This method is functional to qualitative data research, because it gives to the author the opportunity to discover theory from the empirical data and to research further (Gioia, Kevin, Hamilton, 2012).

We decided to use a “descriptive coding”, where the labels assigned are informative on the topic of conversation. We decided to adopt this specific approach because of its non-ambiguity and for its suitability for social environments (Miles et al., 2013). Following this approach we assigned to each passage a noun or short phrase that summarised and described the topic of it. An example comes from the coded interview transcript with the Artistic Director when he described his background:

<i>"I have a background in classical ballet but I also have a background in contemporary performative arts as that is where I made my master. In fact I am educated in both. It is just in different times. I was very young when I was doing ballet."</i>	Background
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Together with "descriptive coding" we decided to also associate a "process coding" approach, a method that uses gerunds ("-ing" words). The reason for this choice was to identify "*observable and conceptual action in the data*" (Miles et al, 2013, pp.75), as we were interested in investigating the Danish Dance Theatre employees' understanding of changes in the company by taking into account the particular time sequences. Moreover, this approach is suited for grounded theory research that involves extracting participant actions, interactions and consequences (Miles et al, 2013). It follows an example from a coded interview with the Artistic Director when speaking about the current process of restructuring the organisational structure:

<i>"We have made this plan which was the mapping of the existing organization and now there is a new one that we still have to finished about the new organizational structure. And there are some assigned new responsibilities. And they of course will need to be clearly communicated soon."</i>	Restructuring of the organizational structure
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The mix of these two methods allowed us to extract all the passages with specific labels and to use them as a starting point to construct a narrative.

After having presented the Methodology and Methods used for our research, in the next section a theoretical discussion will follow. The Theoretical Framework will provide a general understanding of models in regards to Organisational identity and Organisational change.

3. Theoretical Framework

As the research question of this paper indicates, we aim at understanding the perception of the employees working in the dance company regarding the technology implementation's impact on identity and on organisational structure. In order to do so, we have been referred to appropriate theories, thus to contextualize and frame our Findings (Chapter 4). The hereby chapter will present the theoretical foundation for this study, which is our tool for data analysis. The chosen topics of literature helped to create a frame which guided us in the design of the conclusions and answer to our research question. These theories are used with the purpose of examining the case study with the correct knowledge and of having a flexible understanding in those cases where the literature lacks information.

There is a wide documented interest in the technological implementation in the arts sector. Nevertheless, in order to make sense of it in the internal environment of an organisation and in the member's perspective, we needed an enlarged frame. This Theoretical Framework has involved the key concepts of our research: Organisational Identity and Organisational Change. As a consequence, our taxonomy of the literature follows the Organisational scheme of Cooper (1988), the *conceptual* one: centred on the research rationale built around concepts of the various theories found in the literature (Randolph, 2009).

The relevant literature for this study is rooted in theories about identity construction, management of the change and the contextualization of these in the creative-cultural organisations' reality, which also concern the field of project management and roles theories. In the following chapter are presented relevant theories with regards to the topics from us investigated. Indeed, organisational identity is a well further analysed subject of study and we need that knowledge to understand the different concepts in relation with the innovation element in the creative field. The innovation element led us to research the change topic and the theories behind the management issues deriving from it. In fact, we wanted to analyse the technological change effects on the internal part of the company. Moreover, creative industries are a good environment where rapid change characterized by innovation often occurs in need of delivering a project. Creative industries as theatre are usually project-based organisations, due to the necessity of different expertise for a specific production. Hence, in the section below there is literature regarding both project management and the roles that members of

organisation need to coordinate. Lastly, during our academic path, it has very often presented to us the struggle of the creative and artistic organisations regarding the union of the creative dimension with the business one. The literature studied here highlights this trade-off, giving us a strong key interpretation of the hereby studied case-study organisation.

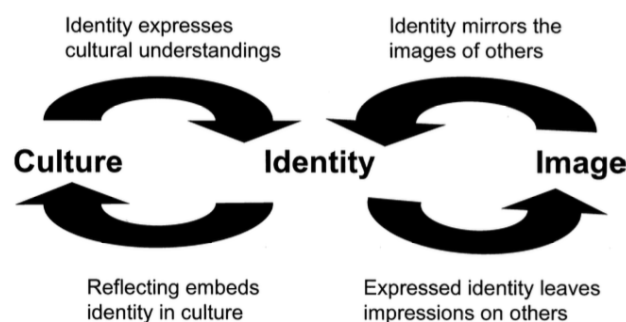
3.1 Theories about Organisational Identity

Albert and Whetten (2016) tried to understand what characterizes organizational identity by asking questions such as “who are we?” and “what kind of firm is it?”. They identified three main features of organizational identity. Firstly, organizational members answer the question “Who are we as an organisation?” and their shared beliefs are central to the organization. Secondly, the authors focused their attention on the enduring element of identity, hence on what links the past with the future. Lastly, organizational identity is what makes an organization distinctive from other organizations. This way to understand and theorize organisational identity are based on the assumption of organisations as institutions with similar powers and responsibilities of individuals. Other studies on organizational identity focused on internal features of the organization itself such as organizational culture: “*How organizations created certain values and norms that in turn formed the organizational identity*” (Martin, 2002). Meaning the culture as a part of the identity, as Shultz and Hatch (2009) have also stated in their article on their organisation dynamic model. As a matter of fact, the article *Organizational identity, construction and legitimacy* by Pedersen introduces the importance of the institution’s culture related to the institution’s identity because it is based on the past but, as it responds to the attitude of others, it acts as a critical factor for the future meaning.

Whereas, the above mentioned identity concept of Albert and Whetten (2016) distinguishes the culture as something different from identity, along with the organisational *image*. This one responds to the question “*What do they think about Me?*”, and for other researchers it integrates the external environment aspect in the identity’s dimension (Mead, 1934; see also Shultz & Hatch, 2009). These researchers’ theories are based on the “I” and “Me” concepts, where “Me” is what produces a sense of self based on what others say about it, meaning the awareness of a person of the self. “I” on the other hand, is the organism's response to the attitudes of others, hence the awareness that it is possible to resist what others say (Mead, 1934). The two are distinguishable and independent but they create, sustain and change organisational change when involved in different processes. Exactly, there are

four processes that link identity, image and culture in a dynamic way. The first one, the mirroring process is the process by which identity is mirrored in the images of others. Then, the reflecting process involves the fact that identity is embedded in cultural understanding. Expressing requires culture that makes itself known through identity claims. Lastly, impressing is the process where the expression of identity leaves impressions on others (Figure 3.1). A definition of organisational image can be found in the work of Dutton and Dukerich (1991, p. 550): “*what [organisational members] believe others see as distinctive about the organisation*”, that can be linked to the concept of Mead’s definition of “Me”. The image that external stakeholders form is mirrored back to the organisation, providing for the company important feedback that can help to know itself.

Culture is defined by Hatch and Schultz (2002, p. 996) as “*the tacit organizational understandings (e.g. assumptions, beliefs and values) that contextualize efforts to make meaning, including internal self-definition*”. Organisational culture, similarly to the analogy between organisational image and the concept of “me”, can be connected to the sense of “I”, as it is not something given by others, but it resides in deep layers of meaning, value, belief and assumption (Hatch, 1993; Schein, 1985, 1992; Schultz, 1994). As similarly to “I” that is something the individual is unaware of, culture is defined in the literature to be more tacit than explicit (Hatch & Schultz, 2000; Krefting & Frost, 1985). A last element that overlaps between the “I” and the organisational culture is the responsiveness to external attitudes and to what others say.



(Figure 3.1)

Indeed, there are studies which suggest identity is defined both internally but also outside the organization. According to these theories, it is taken into consideration a more dynamic process of identity construction where identity changes over time (Albert, Ashforth and Dutton, 2000). To bring more light onto the identity definition of a company, hereby are presented two different studies and

approaches to the topic. The first one is taken from the Ravasi and Shults (2006) article on the organisational identity threats, the second one is taken from the Pedersen and Dobbin (2006) article treating identity and legitimation.

In the first article there are detected two main groups: one is The *Social Constructionist Perspective* and the other one is *Social Actor Perspective* (Ravasi & Schults, 2006). The first perspective considers identity as the collectively shared belief on the central organisation's features. These scholars have their focus on the consideration of these central and permanent features given by the "*collective understanding*". Indeed, these features are considered those who distinguish one company from another. Hence, the collectivity aspect underlines, for these scholars, the social construction of the organisation, then the *identity* is the collective meaning negotiated between the members following a *sensemaking process*. "*Sensemaking is the process through which people work to understand issues or events that are novel, ambiguous, confusing, or in some way violate expectations.*" (Maitlis & Christianson, 2014). This group of researchers are encouraged to focus their studies on the envisioning of organisations leaders instead of focusing on the endurance aspects, moreover they target the organisational responses to external factors instead of the distinctive elements. The second perspective, *Social Actor Perspective*, has its roots in the institutional theories which means that identity is subjected by a "self-definition" requirement. This requirement is satisfied by the individuals inside the organisation with the concepts of continuity, coherence and distinctiveness. Scholars of this group explain that this clarity of perceptions leads individuals in a process of *sensemaking* influenced by how both internal and external individuals categorize the organisation. This theory is also stating that distinctiveness is a central feature on which identity is based and given by internal members and factors.

Here are presented the theories concerning the second article, two approaches. One is based on a compartmentalized and closed perception of the concept of identity: *Organisational Culture approach*. The other considers organisations as open systems, it puts emphasis on organisation-environment relations: *Neoinstitutional theorists* (Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006). On one hand, the *Organisational Culture approach*' identity is given by a socially constructed *meaning* within the organisation and it follows the process of a collective attribution of significance. This approach focuses on internal learning and intra-organisational knowledge sharing, and how this internal process is conducted in the search for the identity. Considering these factors, in the article is pointed out that identity should be stable and continuous, as long as the meaning is within the institution which is

managed by formal practice and the leaders' sensegiving. The result could be that through this internal and structured search of collective self-identity, the institution will aim to polymorphism (the ability to change meaning in different contexts) (Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006). On the other hand, opposite to organisational culturalists, institutionalists put emphasis on organisation-environment relations. According to them, the *meaning* of the organisation is socially constructed *among* many organisations through collective attribution of rationality. This approach includes an informal internal and external structure which allows flexibility and change management. Knowledge and learning are not only internal but it is shared with other institutions, leading to a convergence of knowledge, structure, process of identity formation and practices: institutional isomorphism (Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006; see also DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Taking into consideration the theories herewith presented, it is generally accepted that organisations' identity need to be defined in order to have a purpose and this process can be carried out in terms of structure (Chandler, 1962; Rumelt, 1974), activities (Thompson, 1967) or defining their missions (Abell, 1980). These approaches are becoming even more complicated to apply in light of developments in recent years, such as digitalization and the usage of new technologies and whose consequences on business society (Camillus, 2011). With our analysis, we want to deepen the importance of the identity and ability of it to evolve with the organisation in order to endure: "*To maintain our identity we have to renew it*" (Bang&Olufsen, 1993).

3.2 Theories about Change Management

In the previous paragraph, it has been said how important it is for any institution to have a clear identity and to try to remain aligned to it. Within our thesis we focus our study on the change concerning identity and organisation internal processes. For this reason in the following pages the main topic is "change".

Literally, "change" means to become/make different, and it has not a negative or positive implication. Regarding the social and entrepreneurial reality, change has played a key role during these past years where, because of globalization and digitalization, work, relations and plus social environment moved faster and more differently than it has ever happened before (Söderlund & Bredin, 2006). In their book *Making Sense of Change Management* (2012) Cameron and Green are describing how an individual can be driven to change, especially when it concerns a team. As a matter of fact,

organisations are made and led by individuals who need to be aware of the fact that, through constant and healthy comparison with the work environment, they learn and evolve (Gomez, 2015). This is a huge capital for managers and for an organisation itself (Bourdieu, 2005), which are in need to understand how to fit the individual's and the organisation's aim in order to have a clear identity and a well-functioning teamwork (Cameron & Green, 2012).

There are many factors that trigger change and these can be internal or external. There are four levels of change triggers which are caused by external environments, and these include macro-environment, industry, competitors and markets (Johnson et al., 2008). Organizational change can also be triggered by internal factors as the need for creativity and innovation (Lewis, 2011). Other new visions and encouragement to internal change can be proposed by stakeholders (Oakland & Tanner, 2007). In the articles hereby cited, there are always some main concept regarding change management which must be considered:

- Awareness of opportunities in an external environment which otherwise can become threats.
- Awareness of internal weakness and failures which represent an important opportunity to improve and innovate.
- Leaders should not be frightened by debate and friction factors, because innovation and change must be prioritized over stability and routine (Storey and Salaman, 2005).

The new Darwinism is: "innovate or perish", meaning that today everyone and every firm needs to be innovative and to be flexible facing the change, otherwise being too static can be fatal for the economy and for the development of the organisation. Indeed, the most relevant factor in terms of firms' performance that good change management can deliver is: long-term competitiveness (Söderlund & Bredin, 2006).

Smith and Lewis in their article (2011) have provided a theory regarding the organisational management paradox and the frictions caused by it. A paradox is "*as contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously and persist over time*" (Smith & Lewis, 2011, pp.382), these paradoxes are divided into "learning", "organizing", "performing" and "belonging". This article takes into account the fact that environmental forces are creating in organisation different intricate dynamics that increase tensions and frictions, needing and leading to changes. The cited forces are globalization, hyper-competition and technological innovations, which requires identity clarity and flexibility in order to have long-run success. These important external environment factors have hence

led to a revolutionary transformation of society, communication and moreover, organizations' and individuals' way to define their work (Pedersen et al, 2020). Technology and innovation have proved to be powerful tools that in creative or artistic hands operate an important role in changing and pushing onwards boundaries of creative business (e.g. Spotify, or Amazon in the TV industries). These businesses are the result of experience-driven offers and technological offers (Furnari , 2020). Another example are social media that have added an element of co-creation with the customers, changing the relation between producers, intermediaries and consumers (Pedersen et al, 2020) . This is the example that the change regarding boundaries involves roles within creative industries as well, where experts and gatekeepers need to change their role because of the closer relationship among producers and customers (Furnari , 2020) .

Due to this change in the users' involvement, much of creative industries' innovation is now co-produced or out-sourced with significant input from clients, leading to a project base orientation. The creative industries field requires problem-solving, and usually it is project-based business, therefore, innovations often remain *ad hoc* (Green & Miles, 2007). Outsourcing enables many companies to compete on price and take advantage of lower costs, especially if the leading projects are cycles (they are repeated over the time) (Green & Miles, 2007). It can be deduced that change and innovation occur most successfully when it is conducted as a project, there are less cost-obstructions and the system is open to accept different incentives. Therefore, projects based business can be a possible good example of a successful organizational change (Biedenbach & Söderholm, 2008; Bresnen, 2006). Still there is no precise method of analysis and management of the change, even more considering that each firm reality has different change and challenges framework and relations (Cameron & Green, 2012).

3.3 Theories about Project Management

In the literature it can be noticed that projects are considered as “temporary organisations” (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995) where people with different knowledge and skills are grouped together with institutional norms and aiming to deliver specific actions, whose success is measured with an economical outcome (Grabher, 2002). The “temporary” element is given by the fact that is very well defined when they begin and when they finish. Moreover, as projects are considered unique, they include novel processes (Turner & Müller, 2003). Of course, the uniqueness and the novelty

determine an impossibility to know the changes' outcome, every time is different. It creates uncertainty, and moreover the different knowledge and skills need an action of integration, otherwise delivering the project within the required parameters is difficult (Turner & Müller, 2003).

Both Lundin and Söderholm (1995) and Turner and Müller (2003) have theorized that these “temporary organisations” have a life-cycle, and these organisations face differences between before and after the fulfilment of the projects. The Lundin & Söderholm (1995) theory of different stages is based on their theorized features of temporary organizations, these features are developed in the 4Ts-framework, *time*, *task*, *team* and *transition*.

- *Time*: it refers to the fact that it is fundamental a clear conception of time limit horizon, actions and delivery of the project depend on it.
- *Task*: this is considered the *raison d'être* of the organisation, because not anyone will complete this task in the same way in the future.
- *Team*: this element requires manpower, while the two before concern more economic resources allocation. Projects need a specified group of human resources that can combine different skills and knowledge to perform and accomplish the task as desired.
- *Transition*: temporary organisations have the expectation that there should be a change between “before” and “after” their existence, a qualitative difference.

Hence, their life-cycle of temporary organisation/project theory consist of four sequence concepts: *action-based entrepreneurialism*, *fragmentation for commitment-building*, *planned isolation and institutionalized termination*. The action-based entrepreneurialism is the first phase and has as a key-figure: the entrepreneur, whose role is to “*initiate and provide the impetus for the creation of a temporary organization*” (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995, pp. 445). In this situation functionalities and the procedures are institutionalized, and for the entrepreneur there are implied costs. In this phase is determined the team. The second phase is the fragmentation for commitment-building that determines practicalities, time-frame and task, so the criteria for termination are developed. There are two functions: one is to provide facilitations for handling the task and scope, the other is to secure commitment in the team. Third phase's focus is in the execution of the plan in order to accomplish the task. The plan aims at minimizing possible threats and disturbances. At last there is the institutionalized termination phase, which concerns the dissolution of the temporary organization.

Moreover, considering these steps and phases that characterize project based organisation, there are

also more specific studies about the creative field. Team, time and creativity relations has been theorised by Gersick (1995) while analysing how teams in temporary organisations are able to create novel work in a limited time frame. According to the author there are some facilitators to boost creativity under pressure. The first one refers to *Getting Started* where initial ideas are presented to the team as goals, that however, leave some room for the crew members to express their inventiveness. The second, *First Period of Momentum*, involves the elaboration of the initial ideas and materials from the team. This phase is generally characterised by uncertainty as choices are not yet settled. In fact, the definitive choices are made during the *Midpoint*, leading to a more executive phase. Gersick (1995) stresses the importance of *Setting Stable Deadlines* that have the function to mark all the different phases of a project.

Turner and Müller (2003) have as well theorized on temporary organizations and their life-cycle, but from an organisational perspective. In their paper they address to project as:

- Production function: the project has the aim to deliver a task, so to produce what it is required, indeed there is an “endeavour” component.
- Temporary organization: by their definition projects are a vehicle for organizing resources, hence they are organization, with a precise time-frame of life.
- Agency for change: the projects’ outcome usually lead to a set of changes and their are chosen exactly because better suited for managing change than the functional organization.
- Agency for resource utilization: projects are agencies for assigning resources across the firm and to exploit them for their task.
- Agency for uncertainty management: projects are unique and they have a very limited amount of time to achieve the task with a specific team. The management of this case is uncertain because it is difficult to foresee the risks and the dynamic of resources. For these reasons the structure of the project is very important, additional costs are easily met.

These elements of temporary organisation highlight the issues regarding conflict among stakeholders, the amount of projects that can be undertaken, the optimization of benefits, the size of the organisation and the role of the project manager. As a matter of fact, Turner and Müller (2003) consider the project manager role as the chief executive of the temporary organization and as the agent of the principal.

“The principal (owner) then needs to appoint an agent (chief executive) to manage the work of the temporary organization to achieve those ends” (Turner & Müller, 2003, p. 3). They describe the discipline of project management as the process through which the project is delivered and the

objectives successfully achieved.

Although this form of goal accomplishment is more and more used, and it creates an optimal way to integrate cross-department skills in order to implement innovation and unique products, there are inherent risks in being a project based firm. Whitley (2006) has theorized four types of project based firms and all of them are characterized by a combination between high and low level of separation and stability of roles and of singularity of goals and outcomes. *Organisational* where singularity of goals and separation/stability of roles are both *low*; *Hollow* which is characterized by both *high* singularity of goals and separation/stability of roles; *Precarious* with a *high* singularity of goals and *low* stability of roles; and lastly *Craft* where singularity of goals is *low* and stability of roles is *high*. Each of these categories face a certain kind of risk, for example high singular outputs concern the difficulties in evaluating products and services, even if they benefit from strong appropriability and high distinctiveness. With regards to the division of labour, it is important to have them settled so that there is continuity of professional identities and, moreover, these are defined across projects, using their expertise. Nevertheless, if the organisation field of operation is marked by rapid technical change, continuity of the roles cannot be possible, because instead of stability it is required flexibility (Whitley, 2006).

Many scholars have identified key features of project-based orientation of work within creative industries (Grabher, 2004; see also DeFillippi, 2015). This is caused by the fact that industries such as advertising, music and design are subjected to a rapid modification of styles, tastes and information. Hence, to lower the risks and increase the innovative element, they are shifting to project-based modality of work (Vinodrai & Keddy, 2015). In truth, creative workers need to adapt and improvise, recombining ideas and novelty, thanks to their team skills and knowledge, following then project dynamics. Referring to Whitley's theories (2006) on stability of roles inside the project-based organisations, it must be said that in the creative industries context, employees' roles are standardized and craft on employees' skills and expertise, in order to remain stable between different succession of projects. In this way, teams are predefined and roles are depending on the specialization, so the process is quickly settled (Bechky, 2006). However, the digital revolution has some consequences as the increasing dependence upon audience-generated content and upon the customer's new role of co-producer of content. This has resulted in a challenge for project management, hence, there is concern on these new relationships that are likely to create new tensions and new dilemmas (DeFilippi, 2015).

3.4 Theories of Roles

As it has been stated in the previous paragraph, roles are important inside organisations and moreover inside temporary ones, such as creative organisations especially in the last years. Indeed, during the last decades, digitalization and new technologies have blurred the boundaries of roles inside organisations, because of the more detailed and specific expertise required, and even because of roles outside the organisations as the customer is becoming involved in the creation process (DeFilippi, 2015; see also Camillus, 2011).

In the article on the role-based coordination in temporary organisations, Bechky (2006) shows how temporary organisations try to benefit from specialized skills of their members and minimize the cost of coordination. This approach is established in industries such as theatres, but recently also project-based organisations of other fields are becoming more familiar with it. Indeed, these organisations, due to their nature, do not have the traditional hierarchical structure, and they do have a network supported by relationships. For this reason, their mechanism component is mainly based on socialization and reputation (Jones et al, 1997). In the article it has been observed and analysed the case of a film-set, and what it has been deduced is that the organisation is founded on enduring and structured role systems. Yet temporary organisations rather use interpersonal coordination and informal communication (March and Simon 1958, Thompson 1967, Galbraith 1973). Flexibility is an important and central element of temporary organisation, for this reason they rather use short-term workers with the required expertise for the task, instead of formal rules and training (DeFillippi and Arthur 1998, Faulkner and Anderson 1987). As a drawback, they have to confront a good amount of uncertainty because task division and environment do not depend on formal structure but on interpersonal processes (Bechky, 2006). Throughout the presented article, it is stated that, even though the lack of permanent structures, different project-based organisations choose the structure of role using informal approaches, but still they develop strong work division and normative rules. In truth, these structures can also lack reliability, and there is the need of a careful coordination in order to avoid costly errors. Some scholars have theorized that an alternative could be to involve both structure and the agency of individuals. Following a *role-based approach to coordination* (Bechky, 2006), what provides continuity to organisations are the units of socialization, which are roles (Goffman, 1961b). There are different perspectives, the *structural perspective* theorizes the roles as bundles of tasks and norms which represent a social position in the structure. Indeed, this theory

focuses on the expectations arisen from other role occupants and a circumscribed individuals' behaviour. Whereas, the interactionist approach, in contrast, focuses on how individuals can build social arrangements by role-taking. Both conceptions of roles explain insights on how work is organized in the absence of permanent structures and rules (Bechky, 2006).

In the investigation conducted by Bechky (2006), on a film-set, results that crew members rely on a generalized role structure that allows for continuity as well as negotiation of roles on different films set. This level of internal coordination is accomplished through interaction and social relation among the crew, but once the set is settled and the project starts, the divisions of roles and tasks become increasingly specialized and with a lack of mobility.

The research shows that typically at the beginning of their careers crew members have undifferentiated mass of production roles, typically as assistants and more they work in different projects then later they specialize. This happens also because of the competitiveness of the job-market related to movies' industry, so aspiring crew members will accept practically any position offered to them.

Eventually, this study is helpful to understand the nature of temporary organisation when it comes to roles coordination. Even though the environment is subjected to flexibility, informalities and interpersonal relation, when the project officially starts roles are fundamental and well defined because they need to guide the interpersonal aspect of these organisations and the tasks accomplishment. Nevertheless, people seemed inclined to accept criticisms and to express expectations gently, trying hard to improve their performance. *"This social pressure not only helped coordinate tasks, but also contributed to sustaining the generalized role structure"* (Bechky, 2006, pp. 13). This study researched the relevance of roles for coordination in organizations, increasing our understanding of how the process of role enactment contributes to coordination (Bechky, 2006).

When we have analysed the findings, we have realized that we did not cover an area of role theories regarding the figure of leaders in creative industries. In fact, from our research we realized how crucial can be this role for employees and through the theories, here reported, we have been able to support and categorize the information we got. In the article about creative leadership of Manimelis, Kark and Epitropaki (2015) introduces three different conceptualizations which try to explain the different effects and reasons of leaderships' types. The first one initially was developed in order to understand

different leadership styles' effects, and here the leader's role is to promote creativity in the organisation, not being the source of it. The second one conceptualizes the leader as the creative-process primary source, the leader has an entrepreneurial approach. The third conceptualization presents again the leader as a source of creative inputs but his/her role is to also integrate the ideas of others (Manimelis, Kark & Epitropaki, 2015).

Within the more global definition "*creative leadership refers to leading others toward the attainment of creative outcome*" (Manimelis, Kark & Epitropaki, 2015, pp. 400), this "creative leader" phenomena has three manifestations:

- The leader who facilitates creativity of employees. In the facilitating context, employees' contributions are influenced by the leader. There is the perception of employees acting as "primary creators", while there are leader's supportive actions.
- The leader who directs his creative vision materialization. In this context, it is the leader who may act as the "primary creator", but the actual creative contributions are influenced by the employees.
- The leader who integrates heterogeneous creative contributions. Integrating context is the one which entails more balance between leader and employees, hence its creative outcomes are more sensitive to this synergy.

There are challenges in all of these contexts, depending on the level of formality, flexibility, creative quality and coordination. For example, in some contexts more than in others, as the integrated one, the difficulty consists in organizing the structure of teams in order to exploit in the most suitable way the exchange of ideas and the understanding of different members. In such contexts, leaders can act as a creative broker "*who synthesizes creative inputs whose production is often dispersed in time and space*" (Manimelis, Kark & Epitropaki, 2015, pp. 445). Indeed, some studies have highlighted that especially in temporary project based organisations a creative broker who acts as an independent producer can lead to better creative outputs.

3.5 Creative Industries Paradox

It has been frequently repeated that creative and cultural industry confront itself with two main aspects of its organisational identity: on one hand, there is creativity "*implies an un-structured and spontaneous set of outcomes in which individuals are able to autonomously produce new ideas and*

concepts”; while on the other hand there is the business part, “*industry implies a set of standardised and regulated practices as well as efficiency and management behaviour, as embodied in organisational theories of leadership, change management and bureaucracy*” (Knight & Harvey, 2015, pp. 809-810). Consequently, managing a creative/cultural business reality means to match this embodiment of the paradox along with the research of flexibility and stability. Why are these two factors considered as paradoxes? According to the above reported definition of Lewis and Smith (2011), because these elements exist simultaneously in the same context of reality, they are interrelated, even though they are in contradiction. Therefore, there is a deep gap created by contradictions, the heart of paradoxes, and it generates lack of certainty.

Lewis’s and other paradox theories explain that to achieve long-term sustainability, organisations’ managers need to balance both needs, those of flexibility and those of stability (Andriopopulos, 2003). Creative industry is an environment that is usually fertile for innovations and new developments. Hereby, these realities are studied at the organisational level to understand how to enable creativity and innovation in specific settings as a practical process (Andriopopulos, 2003). In cultural institutions whose identity is reinforced by the existence of different professional groups collaborating for the creation of unique practices and delivering a very high performance, the overcome of the budgetary problem is not always obvious (Glynn, 2000). This is the symptom of the paradox concerning the creativity field: creativity and culture vs business performance, that have been theorized as the paradox between exploration and exploitation (Knight & Harvey, 2015). Exploration refers to search and discovery, creating knowledge and innovation beyond the “as-usual activities”. Exploitation refers to repetition and implementation of existing knowledge (Knight & Harvey, 2015). Organisations that pursue exploitation without exploration are exposed to technological disruption and rigidity, while competitors identifying new opportunities would gain more market share (Gilbert, 2005; O’Reilly & Tushman, 2008). By contrast, exploration without exploitation leads to high levels of organisational uncertainty, as actors within the organisation struggle with coherence and motivation (Birkinshaw & Gupta, 2013).

Response strategies to cope with this paradox have been theorized by Knight and Harvey, precisely those are three: Acceptance (embracing conflict); Differentiation (delineating different domains and involving re-connection between domains); Accommodation (reconcile the opposite element creating novelty and creativity). Analysing these paradoxes in their article (2015), Knight and Harvey have

also given a more managerial point of view, identifying the realistic tensions and possible managerial approach to solving them. These tensions concern the knowledge at the intersection of business management and creative industry, the competing demand issues sustained by organisational forms structures, and the differentiation and integration conflicts management.

Eventually, considering this problem born inside creative industry, there is the possibility to connect these three paradoxes to the Lewis' four common types of paradoxes of working settings: Learning (knowledge management to build upon the past for the future), Organizing (meet demand of control and flexibility), Performing (plurality of stakeholders and goals/strategies), and Belonging (challenge the boundaries between self and the group because they need to cooperate to sustain innovation and creativity).

Andriopopulos has theorized six paradoxes which exist inside the creative industry, all of them can be seen under the light of the "exploration vs exploitation" paradox, but this example goes further in a practical point of view of the investigation. Hence, the paradoxes are actually presenting the practical issues that rise when it comes to managing creative people and stimulating them. Meanwhile, it is fundamental not to lose focus on the company performance aims, as financial aspects, break-even point, and as well maintaining structure and rules among the employees. The need to perform requires a good combination of comfort and confrontation in their work environment. In order to do so, rules are needed otherwise there is no control on the improvement process and employees' creativity: *"Creativity involves discipline, it is a systematic process, it does not happen tactically – we cannot afford undirected creativity"* (Andriopopulos, 2003, pp. 382).

As a result, maintaining an appropriate balance between exploitation and exploration is a primary factor in system survival and prosperity (March, 1991). In fact, March has defined the exploitation and exploration paradox more as a trade-off, which makes us evaluate the topic into a more practical perceptive. In the article the two dimensions of exploitation and exploration are referred to their consequences, as investing on what is already existing rises stability but has the risk of being less competitive, while investing in something new takes time and effort but can lead to something better and competitive.

4. Findings

Thanks to the interviews with different employees of the Danish Dance Theatre we gained valuable insight of their understanding of recent changes. We are referring to the fact that in 2018 they welcomed a new Artistic Director, who conveyed to a change of vision and processes. Moreover, Danish Dance Theatre is leading a production toward innovative boundaries and through innovative creative processes. Over the herby discussed interviews, we investigated the meaning these elements have for the employees and how they understand them in the daily work in the company.

In the section below, a detailed report of the empirical findings is given. First, the understanding of the employees of the Danish Dance Theatre of the company Identity and Identity Change are presented. In the process of analysing the interviewees' answers, we recognised some key-elements that would have been the pillar of the identity understanding: mission, vision, elements that characterise the company, creative process and identity change.

The second section focuses on the perception of the Danish Dance Theatre employees on Organizational Change. We have been able to determine from employees point of view in what part of their organisation they have experienced changes. As a result, elements as project management, usage of technology and roles have importance and relevance.

Once the Findings will be outlined, the Discussion section will follow, where our findings will be interpreted in light of the theories presented in the Theoretical Framework.

4.1 Understanding of Identity and Identity Change at DDT

When we asked the interviewees to talk about the identity of Danish Dance Theatre, they have mentioned the mission, vision, creative process and elements that characterise the company. The following sections will provide the understanding of the interviewees on these elements.

4.1.1 Understanding of DDT mission

When the participants were asked about what they believed the mission of the Danish Dance Theatre is, their answers were rather uniform. In all cases when expressing their understanding of the reasons why the company exists, there was an emphasis on the role that the DDT plays in society.

To explain it, they sometimes compared themselves to the Royal Danish Theatre (RDT), highlighting the differences among the two institutions. The Production Assistant for instance referred to DDT as *“an alternative in Denmark from the Royal Danish Theatre”* referring both to the level of establishment, as well as of content. According to the interviewee, differently from the RDT, which represents the emblem of the national Danish performing art, the DDT is less institutionalized.

“[...] we are distinct and different from the rest. We are not exactly part of the independent scene but we are not as established as the Royal Ballet. So it’s an in-between role that actually needs to be covered by someone and we are the ones.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

However, they both aim at bringing on stage outstanding performances. What distinguishes the DDT at a national level is the more innovative offer, characterized but unexpected surprising elements. Performances are in fact representative of contemporary themes, as they aim at reflecting contemporary society:

“This attention to contemporary life and about identity I think.. the role that we have in the Danish dance sector really designs our identity. The fact that we are not institutionalized as the Royal Ballet but we are still an institution big enough to take some risks and invest in experimental or more innovative projects. This should really define us.” (Production Assistant, 2020).

In addition, interviewees when speaking about the mission, highlighted the fact that the DDT is publicly funded, which represents for the company an opportunity. As expressed by some participants the fact of receiving public funds enables the company to be more experimental and therefore to take some artistic risks.

On the other hand, there are some limitations and duties connected with getting government funds. Being publicly funded means for the members of the DDT to have to meet specific requirements to fulfil the State’s expectations. An example expressed by the Artistic Director is the obligation that the DDT has toward the Danish society, to be able to communicate with its entirety and to represent it:

“So, then there is the practical aspect that is how can we justify being an artistic institution that gets government funding if we do not have a vary audience. I think that it is a quite important practicality, right? Because we get government funding and we have to somehow reach an important slice of Denmark.” (Artistic Director, 2020)

It can be understood that the government expectations differ from those of the DDT members, as said by the Artistic Director. In fact, they, not only want to represent Danish society, but they are currently aiming at becoming worldwide recognised. From the Artistic Director words, it can be perceived his intention of bringing the company at more international levels reaching new audiences, in order to bring recognition to the institution. This is an expression of the company desire to be ambitious and to always raise the bar in terms of quality.

“[...] And you know for me a measure of success is being invited to high calibre festivals, so I am super happy about the Shao in Paris, it is a first. After 40 years, the company finally goes to the most important house of dance in Europe and there are others, South Walton London or there are other festivals in France and even though we had a big presence in Germany it has been on very small stages. The company has never been to Berlin or other kind of bigger things. So, to up the game it is really a strong measure of success for the company and acknowledgment that we are important and that what we should be seen.” (Artistic Director, 2020)

In conclusion, what emerged from the interviews' words is that there is a common understanding among the company of the reasons why the DDT exists. Some participants to better explain the role of the company compared it to the Royal Danish Theatre, referred to it as the main “competitor”. They highlighted the similarities between the two institutions in terms of quality of the productions offered, mentioning however the differences in terms of innovation which distinguishes the DDT. Lastly, also being public funded shapes the role that the DDT has for the society and therefore its mission. In our findings, it emerged a difference in what the Government requires and expects, and the ambitions and aspirations of the employees. In fact, the need to speak to the Danish society by finding themes that are engaging and actual on the national territory are in contrast with the desire of international recognition of the company.

4.1.2 Understanding of DDT vision

After getting an idea of the interviewees understanding of the company's mission, further questions were asked to deduce their understanding on the Danish Dance Theatre's vision. When speaking about the vision both the administrative and artistic staff referred to it in artistic terms focusing on the artistic vision.

Interestingly, all the interviewee pointed out that in 2018 the lead of the company changed after the appointment of the new Artistic Director. This has been perceived by the interviewees to have had a strong impact on the Artistic vision of the Danish Dance Theatre. In fact, when referring to changes in the company's vision, many interviewees identified the Artistic Director as the driver of change. As it can be understood from the interviews, after the Artistic Director has been appointed, the new values have been communicated and shared from the beginning.

"I think that Pontus has been very clear in giving us, in sharing his own vision of the company."
(Production Assistant, 2020)

This quote also exemplifies that the company's artistic vision is associated by the interviewees with the Artistic Director one, revealing an overlapping between the two. Therefore, it seems that the artistic director's vision is becoming the institution's vision. As stated by one of the interviewees, the overlapping between the Artistic Director's vision and the company one is normal. It is considered occurring because of the strong imprinting the artistic director's role has on all the company: *"[...] it's natural that the identity of the company was in a certain way overlapping the identity of the artistic director just because it's the artistic view [...]."* (Production Assistant, 2020)

The change of artistic directorship is perceived by the interviewees as the beginning of a new era for the company. Despite the fact that the Artistic Director has been in the company for over two years, the artistic effects of his lead are starting to be visible only now. This is because, as it is typical for dance companies, programmes are decided and planned years ahead. Therefore, in the past years the Artistic Director has finished off what was previously planned by the previous Artistic Director Rushton. The new production *Centaur* instead has been conceived and followed by the new Artistic Director throughout the creative process. According to what has been stated during the interviews, *Centaur* has been perceived by the participants as the first of many future innovative projects in Lidberg's style. From the employees' side, it can be perceived their hopes and expectations for the future of the company and hence, how the change of Artistic Director opens up new possibilities for the DDT. An example can be found from what said by one of the dancers interviewed:

"With Pontus at the forefront I think the company is moving towards a direction of precise, yet fluid moves with a presence that will shine through. This company is well on its way to becoming an elegant, thoughtful company and I believe Centaur is a big step forward in the path." (Dancer 1, 2020)

Furthermore, what emerged from the interviewees was a common perception of a more innovative repertoire compared to the past, aligned with the Artistic Director taste.

“We are a contemporary artistic institution so we should be interested in contemporary issues. AI for example is something we are all immersed in, whether you are technological or not. I think that it’s a topic that is “now”, which means this is the topic we need to work with. You could say that we could make also, and maybe we will you know, we could make a work about immigration, or corona or whatever.” (Artistic Director, 2020)

When approaching these aspects of innovation and contemporaneity, it appeared that the interviewees believed that the Danish Dance Theatre offers something that usually people do not expect from a dance company. In the below extract of the interview with the Production Assistant it has been reported the expectation of storming others’ expectations:

“[...] Like something new, and contemporary that can talk to me and not something that is reaching my expectations. This is more something you maybe will see in the ballet audience. Like I go to see ballet because I know what I am going to see. This is not what we want. Of course, this is very difficult today, to build an audience that is ready to go there and do not know what’s going to see.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

The Artistic Director seems to realize that to have success and reach also an international audience, on stage must be confronted with international and nowadays topics. Moreover, he seems to have embraced the fact that the way to communicate and engage society needs novelty and modern technology in artistic expression as well.

In other words, when asked about their understanding of the company’s vision, interviewees naturally mentioned the current shift and adaptation to the new one. This change was attributed by all the interviewees to the change of artistic directorship. Moreover, our findings highlighted that, as interviewees take for granted an overlapping between the company’s vision and the one of the Artistic Director, the change was expected. Lastly, with the appointment of the new Artistic Director the company increased the focus on the contemporary and innovation elements. Specifically, modern and actual themes covered by the performances are recurrent aspects that aim at involving modern audiences. Moreover, to be able to better involve audiences, more innovative means are necessary.

4.1.3 Understanding of the elements that characterise the DDT

When asked about elements that characterize the Danish Dance Theatre and their understanding of who they are as an organisation, interviewees focused on different aspects. A recurrent observation was made on the size of the company. Most of the interviewees defined the company as a small/medium size one, associating this to a distinctive attribute:

“We are the only contemporary dance company of this size and direction in Denmark. [...] I think the size of the company is special. [...]” (Dancer 2, 2020)

While speaking about the size, interestingly words such as “full-time based company”, “all-year around” and concepts such as “stability” emerged, especially from the artistic side. These highlights how valuable it is for artists and how central it is for the company to offer stable contracts. This aspect has been clearly explained by the Stage Manager:

“Looking at how the company is different from other companies in Denmark has a lot to do with the fact that we are the only contemporary company that receives its funding directly from the Ministry of Culture. This means that we are able to give dancers a full year contract. Most dancers in Denmark are freelance.” (Stage Manager, 2020)

Moreover, being a small size company has according to the interviewees an impact also on the quality of the production and of the works presented. When asked about the quality of the DDT’s productions, answers among interviewees were homogeneous, highlighting a common perception of the level among the company. The interviewees focused on the concept of quality referring to words such as “perfection”, “professionalism”, “discipline” and “reliability”. It appeared therefore that quality is a central attribute for the employees at the Danish Dance Theatre, that seems to be always ready to raise the bar as there is a high focus on the audience and their engagement.

“Nowadays in Europe a medium sized, stable contemporary dance company is very unusual. [...] We are the only one in Denmark at this level [...] It is unique just the fact to have a contemporary dance company, it’s really a privilege I would say...I think that it is a unique niche for us that we can provide things that are you know still at a very high level, both production value and artistic value and execution and so on, while being very much smaller than the big opera houses. Now, of course we also don’t have the researchers of a big opera house.” (Artistic Director, 2020).

Furthermore, from the interviewees words can be understood that being a small company allows the artists to grow. As the number of dancers are limited it is more likely compared to larger size companies that all the corps de ballet will be involved, allowing a more active participation and presence during the creative process.

“[...] Especially because this company does such different creations and as well as international touring. This gives us as dancers the possibility of being part of almost every creation, or at least every program, which again means that we get a big variety and different challenges all the time.”
(Dancer 2, 2020)

The size of the company has also effects on the administrative side, as they feel more empowered. As said by the Press and Marketing Manager:

“We are a small organization with a great amount of involvement in the decision making and the planning of performances and the company’s future. All employees are important to run a company like ours.” (Press and Marketing Manager, 2020)

The interviewees when referring to the size of the company, also mentioned the flexibility that this allows compared to larger ones. From a logistic point of view, they seem to have a higher level of adaptivity compared to bigger size companies, which represents a distinctive element as explained the Artistic Director:

“It means we don’t have the weight of the big ballet company, meaning you know to move 50 people around plus tech and workers... I mean is heavy. And we are very flexible, we can make changes rather quickly, we can go places quickly and compared to others we are very flexible while still providing very high kind of high value productions.” (Artistic Director, 2020).

When asked about further characteristics, most interviewees focused their answers on the values at the Danish Dance Theatre. As mentioned by one of the dancers, as the company is facing a transitory phase due to the change of artistic director, there are some values that are changing as the company is changing direction.

“Like many dance companies, Danish Dance Theatre is constantly changing. We have new dancers, there has been a change of staff, as well as artistic director. Therefore, the values naturally also change” (Dancer 2, 2020)

However, the core attributes appear to be perceived similarly inside the company as the interviewees provided similar answers. There was in fact a high focus on attributes such as “passion” associated with “motivation” for working in the company both from the artistic as well from the administrative side. When speaking about their background and education a general passion for theatre and performing arts emerged among the different interviewees. This high intrinsic motivation that emerges from the conversation with them seems to be a crucial aspect in the selection of new members, as it has impacts on the quality of the work.

Moreover, all the members at the DDT focused their answers on the “contemporary” element that represents an enduring attribute for the company. From the beginning, they were founded as a contemporary dance company, an aspect that has positioned them in the industry and which has influenced the artistic choices. As mentioned during the interviews, as a public funded contemporary institution the DDT has the duty to bring on stage innovative productions, involving the Danish and international audience by increasing awareness on modern issues that our society is facing.

Lastly, another important aspect mentioned by some to describe the characteristics of the company is the organisational culture based on trust. Due probably to the small size of the company the employees appear to be rather close to each other. For example, one of the Rehearsal Directors referred to the company as “we are family”.

When asked about the elements that characterise the DDT, interviewees focused on different aspects. Firstly, most of the participants referred to the size of the company, associating to the small numerical dimension the stability they have, especially for the artistic staff. As there are a limited number of dancers in the company, they are involved almost in all the productions leading to stable working contract, differently from what is the norm in the industry. Moreover, it emerged from their words that being a small size company enables the DDT to be more flexible in comparison to other dance companies, and hence to be able to adapt the production to different stages without difficulties.

Values were also mentioned by the participants as characterizing elements for the company. The findings highlight a change of some values due to appointment of the new Artistic Director. However, other values remained unchanged according to the interviewees, representing the enduring attributes of the company. From what emerged from the interviews’ participants both on the administrative and artistic side have a high level of intrinsic motivation as they are moved by passion. This aspect has

positive repercussions on the company's performances. Moreover, the contemporaneity element that characterizes the company represents an enduring attribute.

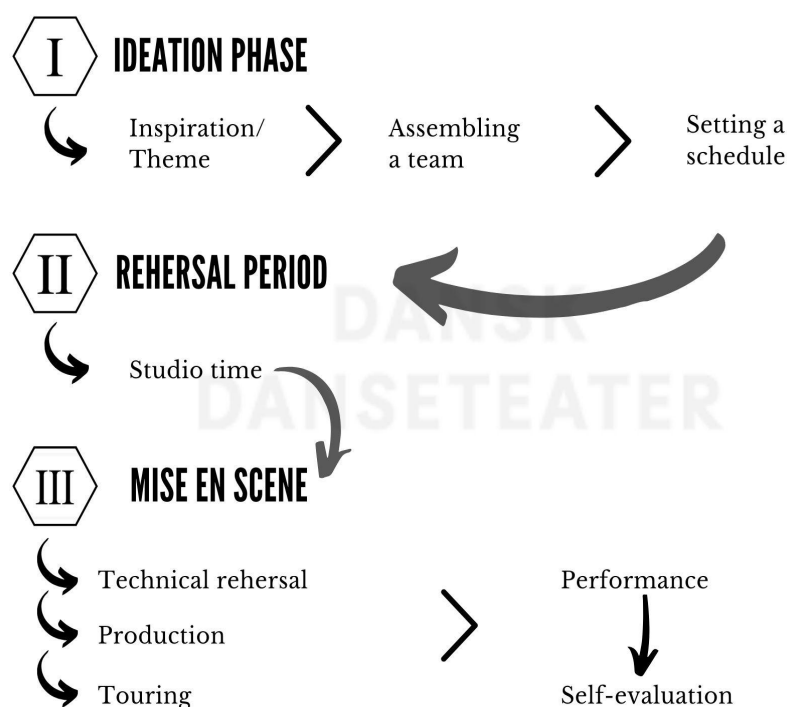
Lastly, most employees referred to the organisational culture of the company when describing the attributes that characterise the DDT, describing it as transparent and based on trust.

4.1.4 Understanding of Creative Process at DDT

As described by the interviewees, the creative process is at the heart of the company as it is their "raison d'être". Therefore, the interviewees stated that they work to fulfil the company mission, hence to address modern society in a contemporary and innovative way by bringing on stage quality productions.

According to our findings the creative process understanding is commonly aligned within the company, both from the artistic and the administrative side. When asked about describing the processes involved, answers were in fact similar among the different members. Interviewees showed an awareness of what happens at the different sides of the company, providing a more detailed analysis of their roles and tasks inside the general context.

From what described by the employees, the creative process can be said to involve different stages that can be found in Figure 4.1: the first one is the ideation of the piece where ideas are analysed and sorted; the second one is the rehearsal period where ideas become movements; lastly the administrative side is present during all the creative process to support the artistic staff and to allow the mise en scene of the production.



(Figure 4.1)

As explained by the interviewees, in the first stage the choreographer, that can be the house choreographer or a guest, creates the concept and meaning behind the piece. It was emphasized by the participants that the guest choreographer is chosen by the Artistic Director and therefore his/her work is coherent and in line with the artistic vision of the company. Moreover, what is said to be distinctive of the Danish Dance Theatre is that every production is original and specifically created for them. The Stage Manager explained that instead of buying pre-existing pieces from other production houses the company prioritized new projects that fit the company style and aesthetics.

“I would say that DDT is different from other dance companies in that we always perform new works that cannot be seen anywhere else. When a modern choreographer has created a great work, then he can sell this work to various companies all over the world, which means that 10 companies in 10 countries can be performing the exact same work at the same time. This means that there no longer is any originality in the work. Maybe we like this work also, but instead of buying the work, we hire the choreographer to create something new on us.” (Stage Manager, 2020))

As emerges from the interview with the Artistic director, he personally relies both on his personal network and on the company's dancers to get inspired and to shape the ideas into a more specific form. The Artistic director's network is a way for the company to get access to ideas and services of what they define as "interesting people". They say they collaborate not only with Guest Choreographers but also with different artists such as for example Visual Artists, Dramaturgists, Costume Designers or Music Composers.

"Well, as you know we invite artists here and I think it is very important that we do so, because we have to have interesting people with us. That is really important." (Artistic Director, 2020)

The importance of the Artistic Director's network is also supported by the words of the Stage Manager, who during the interview has stressed the importance of it as it enables the company to get access to new people and possibilities:

"DDT already had various venues and collaborators around the globe who we have worked with for many years. But when Pontus came, also as a well-known choreographer all over the world, he also took his network with him. There are now very elite venues out there who are working with us and this would never have happened without him." (Stage Manager, 2020)

During the second stage, the initial ideas and concepts are further developed in the studio together with the dancers. As mentioned by the Artistic Director, during this process a lot of changes take place to adapt the imagined movements to those of the dancers:

"One thing that is particular about dance is that you can think of all you want and then you go into the studio and it is not what you thought because you work with people and they are all unpredictable and what you have imagined is not how it was" (Artistic Director, 2020)

The original idea is hence defined by the Artistic director as a "general goal" of what should be achieved, but it only takes its final appearance by working with the dancers. When asked about the creative process dancers pointed out that they are required to "deeply collaborate with choreographers" and are therefore required to be creative and research new movements as said by one of them:

"A task during a creation process could be to create a phrase of movements within certain set frames. It could also be to read a text, see a movie and etcetera, to get into a universe or find inspiration into

movement. For some processes, we talk and discuss a lot before we start even moving our bodies, and sometimes we work physically from day one.” (Dancer 2, 2020)

Moreover, the rehearsal phase is supported by the Rehearsal Directors who assist the Choreographer and the Dancers during the entire process together with the Production Department, in charge of the logistics and planning.

Lastly, the interview mentioned that the creative process can be said to be supported by the rest of the employees of the DDT. The Sound Designer explained that together with the Composer he/she is responsible for the sounds and for technical aspects related. The Stage Manager told us that his responsibilities consist of making sure that the production runs smoothly by supporting Dancers, Stage crew and Technicians throughout the production process. He added that he is also responsible for organising tours around Denmark after the premiere. Moreover, the Marketing Department stated to be involved in the promotion of the project by being responsible for press-work, social media management and offline/online marketing. For this reason, the final result is described by some employees as the collective efforts of all the Danish Dance Theatre members.

When asked if they have experienced changes in the artistic process compared to the past, the interviewees in their answers attributed these changes to the new Artistic Director and to his artistic vision. The artistic staff mentioned that changes have been visible in the past but that *Centaur* has been the first production where they have worked so closely one with the other.

Most of the development and research phase, as mentioned by the Artistic Director during the interview, took place in New York during his fellowship at NYU. For instance, the Artistic Director has worked closely with a Dramaturgic external to the company as well as with two AI experts.

Unfortunately, due to the global pandemic, the production of *Centaur* had to stop in the middle of the creative process during the rehearsal phase. For this reason, although the Choreographer and the Dancers had the opportunity to start working together in the studio, they still need to learn to collaborate and to familiarise with each other's working methods. From what can be understood from the interviewees' words, they are currently facing an adaptation phase by learning to work with each other.

“And we have to keep in mind that all of our choices have to fit with this new «boss» (if we can call him that way), whom we also don’t really know yet.” (Dancer 2, 2020)

Until this stage, the implementation of the AI technology has been positively perceived by the artistic staff. They have defined it as a positive challenge that will push their boundaries leading to experimentation. From the dancers’ words, it can be perceived a positive acceptance of this challenge. As a matter of fact, they seem enthusiastic about working with AI. Moreover, from what emerged, this positive attitude towards implementation of technologies can be found also among the administrative side. The reasons behind the need of bringing new technologies on stage (engaging a broader audience in a contemporary and innovative way) are shared among all the different sides of the company.

What emerged from our findings is that the creative process is at the heart of the company. The creative process at DDT has been described as cross sectional, involving everybody during the three phases: the ideation phase, rehearsal period and the mise en scene of the performance. The final result can therefore be said to be the outcome of common efforts. Interviewees when asked if they have experienced changes in the production process compared to the past, attributed the differences once again to the change of Artistic Director. The production *Centaur* represents for them the manifestation of the changes that employees were expecting, as it is the first project entirely curated through the different phases from the new Artistic Director. However, due to the current lockdown the creative process has been interrupted. Therefore, in the interviewees words it can be found hope and future expectation regarding the implementation of new technologies.

4.1.5 Understanding of identity change

All the interviewees, when asked, agreed that they have perceived a change of organisational identity. Also in this case, the answers provided were rather similar among the different interviewees. The main finding was that interviewees associated and attributed the cause of change mainly to the switch of artistic directorship:

“Yes, I do think that the identity is changing, and the driving force is our new (Artistic) Director” (Stage Manager, 2020)

As the previous Director Tim Rushton has been at the lead of the company for 16 years, interviewees identified an “overlapping” between Rushton vision and the one of the company, as previously explained in Section 4.1.2:

“The previous director has been the director for 16 years so it’s natural that the identity of the company was in a certain way overlapping the identity of the artistic director just because it’s the artistic view, the idea that the director has about dance, the dance field, what is contemporary dance.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

Therefore, according to what was perceived by the Production Assistant, when Rushton left the lead to the new Director, the company had to find new ways to understand and adapt to the Artistic Director vision. As mentioned previously, the understanding of the interviewees of the new value are in line with what expressed by the Artistic Director, that aims at bringing on stage high quality and innovative production that will give to the company a more international resonance compared to the past:

“[...] the company has never performed at any of the really prestigious theatres of the world. It’s 40-year-old and hasn’t been in these big important stages. And for me a measure of success is being invited to high calibre festivals, so I am super happy about the Shao for example in Paris, it is like a first [...].” (Artistic Director, 2020)

In addition to being more international, some interviewees also referred to a desire to attract a younger and more diversified audience. As expressed by one of the dancers:

“The identity is changing, and quite a lot. For the previous identity, I would say that the shows were made for smaller dance stages, mainly in Denmark and for older audiences. That national identity is giving way to a search for a more global renown.” (Dancer 1, 2020)

In conclusion, when speaking about the identity of DDT, all the interviewees mentioned the perception of the shift that is currently happening. Among the interviewees, it emerged a common perception of change in organisational identity, driven according to them by the new Artistic Director. The company is therefore currently facing an adaptation phase to the new artistic vision, the new values and new goals of the company. The DDT by implementing new technologies aims at being more innovative reflecting societal changes. When speaking about change of artistic directorship, interviewees naturally mentioned not only a perception of change of identity but also what they are

experiencing in terms of organisational change. In the next section a more detailed analysis of the interviewees' perception of the effects on the organisation structure and practice will follow.

4.2 Perception of organizational change at DDT

After the first part of the interview, an illustration of the employees' understanding of identity and identity change was created. More questions were asked to the interviewees by elaborating the inputs provided in the first part of the conversation, to understand if there were implications also in the organisational structure. Our interest for the research was to understand how they usually manage projects, how they make sense of their roles and if the technology usage changed something, and along with this organisational perception was important to investigate how they make sense of their roles.

4.2.1 Understanding of Technology usage

Going through the identity and the values of Danish Dance Theatre in the interviews, made it easier for the Production Assistant and Artistic Director to explain why is important the usage of new technologies in contemporary productions. In fact, their reasoning for bringing on stage AI technology is deeply connected with being contemporary and with addressing modern society themes. *"But what I want is to do things about our times. So, AI is a good choice for that. And then, when I started with Centaur it was not clear exactly how I was going to work with AI. You know, robotics is a completely different field and people easily confuse the two. You say AI and people think robot. Robotics has nothing to do with AI necessarily. It is a different industry all together. Of course, you can combine them, but then you have combined two technologies."* (Artistic Director, 2020)

Employees stated that for the Danish Dance Theatre it is not completely new the usage of different technologies, as video projections on the stage, to engage the audience. They also stated that this usage of AI at this level of integration on stage is an important novelty.

When the question about technology and its implementation in the production was asked, we noticed the answers provided by the administrative staff were initially different compared to those of the artistic staff. The administrative staff was concerned in the first place about the implementation they would have liked to bring in their current internal communication practices. And only afterwards

when we specified which type of technology we were referring to, they switched the focus on the AI implementation and they seemed aware of the artistic meaning of using it as well as the technicalities on stage.

With regards to the artistic part of the AI, we have noticed that there is homogeneity among employees' perceptions about the staging of this technology and the preparation behind it. The Artistic Director interview provided accurately the artistic reasons (the contrast between human and machine, movements and voice) and it appears from the other interviewees that this project has been widely welcomed. Moreover, from the gathered opinions about the *Centaur* project, it appears that not only are they enthusiastic to be part of it but they experience the challenge in a positive way.

“What I could realize is that we are human, and as dancers, we always move slightly (or a lot) different than one another, so this is a great experiment and challenge! I am... I am very intrigued to see where this meeting with the AI is going to take us eventually.” (Dancer 2, 2020)

From the interviewees, it seemed that there is a high level of knowledge among the company, dancers included, regarding the technical aspects of the AI. From the findings, it can be understood that the implementation has been driven by curiosity for the new Artistic Director project, but utterly it has been considered fundamental the interviewees understanding of the technology to improve work results.

“Absolutely, yes! We’ve had to adapt our process during this creation quite a lot in order to fit into the constraints of what and how an AI can understand. We’ve changed our process to be much more similar to bits of code. Otherwise, how is a computer to understand? What we’ve done so far, and there will be much more to come, is that for one of the sections we’ve broken down movement sequences into nineteen so-called Streams. We’ve also created a nine-by-nine grid and mapped out on a piece of paper each of the Streams over time”. (Dancer 1, 2020)

This professional consideration of all the aspects, gave us the opportunity to research the staff understanding of these potential practicalities, although we could have not obtained a perspective because of the impossibility of starting the production process. All the interviewees, when further asked about AI effects on their tasks, frequently highlighted the fact that it is not possible to see them yet. Therefore, what they can do is just an assumption of the possible consequences. As said by the Rehearsal Director:

“It is difficult to answer this from the viewpoint of rehearsals due to the current lockdown circumstances. I think the challenges will be that neither the dancers or Rehearsal Directors have worked this way before and technology and dance in a traditional form don’t speak the same language.” (Rehearsal Director 1, 2020)

To sum up, *Centaur* represents the first project for DDT which incorporates such a sophisticated technology. In fact, the AI used in this production is notable for its complexity. From what explained by the interviewees, with the usage of live-generated algorithms connected to motion and sensing systems the technology becomes an active partner of the dancers, responding to the live conditions. Because of these reasons, no performance would resemble the other. The findings highlight a general understanding among the company of the functioning of AI as well as the reason behind this artistic choice. However, it emerged that participants referred to different things when speaking about “technology”. The administrative side for instance naturally described the software and programmes they use instead of referring about the technologies implemented on stage.

4.2.2 Understanding of roles at DDT

Interviewees associated with the change of Artistic Director as the reasons for the changes that are currently happening in the company. When investigating the role that Artistic Director has in the company it emerged that he is not only in charge of deciding the artistic direction and vision for the company, but that he is also the house choreographer as well as the CEO of the company:

“My title is also CEO, I am in essence the Artistic Director but I am like the company director. So, in general I have the responsibility even financially, even though I don’t do it, but I am responsible.” (Artistic Director, 2020)

From our findings, it can be understood that there are some discrepancies in the understanding of the role of the Artistic director inside the company. As emerged during the interviews, employees perceive the Artistic Director as the driving force behind the company, both from an artistic and a business side. From the answers provided it seems that the employees are constantly including him in the decision-making process and relying on him to gain information and understand better his expectations. His name was mentioned by interviewees multiple times when speaking about their

understanding of the company's vision and processes, which consequently resulted in a coherent understanding and common sense-making among the company.

On the other hand, this constant need of referring to him represents for the Artistic Director a challenge. As he mentioned multiple times, he feels that his role and his responsibilities are not entirely understood inside the company as employees seem to expect a constant presence. Specifically, he highlighted that expectations of the administrative staff are sometimes high as they do not take into consideration the other duties he oversees:

“I will say sometimes the administration doesn't really understand. My contract is also to be the house choreographer right, I have to create a work every year so this is a big one. And I like working, and I work all day long and that is not a problem for me. But I can't like both be in the office and at the studio at the same time, physically right? So.. I need support when I am working creatively because I can't divide myself physically. You see what I mean? So that I don't think people really think about that” (Artistic Director, 2020)

This heavy reliance and dependence on the figure of the Artistic Director is perceived by him as something that needs to be improved. As a matter of fact, the Artistic Director compared himself during the interview to a “human spreadsheet”.

Another aspect that was covered during the interviews when asked about the roles, is the need of the Danish Dance Theatre of involving external people in the processes. As mentioned previously, the Danish Dance Theatre is a small size company. As it is typical for a cultural organisation, when a skill is missing inside the company there is the need to outsource it. Therefore, people hired as freelancers are usually experienced professionals and highly specialized. As highlighted by the Stage Manager, this enables the DDT to collaborate with professionals that are “at the top of their field”, from which the company can benefit from their know-how and their recognition in the sector. A reason for outsourcing that can be understood from the Artistic Director's words, stating the need to reduce costs. Market-based relations, according to what implicitly is said during the interview, are a way for the company to bring ideas and skills inside the organisation by still being cost-effective. Having them as permanent staff would not be sustainable in economic terms for the company. An example provided by the Artistic Director regarding this matter is for the role of fundraiser:

“In the new administration there is a host, that is a fundraiser. And part-time and I am not sure if that person should be with us part-time or if he should be external, if it should be a firm that we hire.”
(Artistic Director, 2020)

During the interviews, we wanted to investigate if the interviewees have perceived a change in their roles due to the implementation of new technologies. When asked if the use of new technologies on stage has affected their role and tasks most interviewees said that, as the *Centaur* production is still in the middle of the creative process, it is hard to predict now what the future effects will be. Some interviewees expect not to have any effect on their routines and tasks caused by the implementation of new technologies.

“From my point of view, this will impact very relatively in a sense that from the touring perspective, since the technology is implemented in the piece, this is more a technical related issue.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

For other interviewees, the new production required a different preparation as for the case of the Sound Designer. During our interviews, he said he expects to learn new systems and technologies as required for specific projects. Therefore, in the *Centaur* production case, although he admits that the learning process was more challenging than usual, he said he still approached it in a similar way as he would have done with a different project.

“It is hard to say really. It hasn't had a big impact yet. Though, we needed a sensor system, so I've researched and learned a new system for the performances. Also, I've met new people, and I've learned new systems and new techniques, but I would say it happens often in new productions.”
(Sound Designer, 2020)

Similarly, also the Rehearsal Directors affirmed that for them there has not been a relevant impact on their tasks. From what emerged during the conversation, they have noticed that the *Centaur* production requires different care regarding new processes. However, they think that, who will experience a bigger change will be the dancers.

“Well...At this stage of the process, no it has not had a huge impact on my tasks, to be fair.”

“Yes, true. The only thing it has changed is that the computer programmer and dancer language are not at all the same so there needs to be some interpretation of meanings.”

“But it’s possible to see that the dancers will need to approach their performance differently! And with the AI being in control they will need to think differently, I am not talking about muscle memory but more about the spot to figure out the solution and the task during the show. This is different as usually everything is ‘safe’ once the premiere has happened.” (Rehearsal Director 1 & 2; 2020)

As a matter of fact, what affirmed by the Rehearsal Directors has been confirmed by the dancers’ answers. During the interview dancers have expressed a change in their working practice and in processes due to the implementation of the AI technologies.

“Absolutely, yes! We’ve had to adapt our process during this creation and quite a lot in order to fit into the constraints of what and how an AI can understand.” (Lucas, 2020)

On these basis, our findings regarding the perception of roles at the DDT highlight a different perception inside the company of the role of the Artistic Director. As he stated, not only he has the duties connected to the Artistic Director title, but he is also the resident choreographer of the company as well as the CEO. From the participants' words, it emerged a high reliance on the Artistic Director figure both from the artistic as well as the administrative side, which however seemed to be perceived negatively from the Artistic Director itself. This constant need to be present, and constant interaction seemed to be perceived as an obstacle to fulfil all his duties.

Another interesting aspect that emerged is the need for the DDT to outsource missing skills and know-hows in order to reduce the cost connected to having that figure as permanent staff in the organisation, as well as having access to very specialised people.

Lastly, unfortunately the effects that the new production *Centaur*, and therefore the implementation of new technologies on stage, have on the role understanding and task distribution are still unclear due to the interruption of the production in the middle of the creative process. However, participants expect that the most affected one will be the dancers compared to the administrative staff that does not seem to expect major changes in their routines.

4.2.3 DDT as a Project-based organization

When discussing roles, tasks and responsibilities with the interviewees, they often referred to how the Danish Dance Theatre is a Project based organisation. The DDT in fact creates temporal systems which involve not only internal employees but also external actors for the production of their

performances. Those systems work and exist until the production is carried out and brought on stage. What emerged from interviewees words when speaking about their roles and responsibilities for each project, is that what they are required to do in terms of tasks varies from a production to the other. They said that during the first stages of the production, during the ideation phase, they have to negotiate their roles depending on the needs of the company. This aspect was clearly explained by the Sound Designer during the interview:

“I usually define my role in the new project and then try to identify the direction and thoughts to put into this project to make sure I will follow along the same path.” (Sound Designer, 2020).

Moreover, it was evident from the conversation with the employees that among the company there is a general awareness of the totality of the project. When asked to describe their roles inside the company the participants did not only focus on the definition of the position they have, but they also referred and described other crew members' responsibilities. These aspects highlight the high interrelation between the different members that have to constantly communicate with each other to notify the progressions and the difficulties encountered during the production process. On the other hand, they also emphasized that work has to be carried out independently due to the small size of the company that leads to a higher pressure and dependence on the singular individual. The final result therefore comes from the singular contribution of the employees that however always have in mind the bigger picture. For these reasons, to make sure that everybody is on the same page and that there is a general understanding in the company of what is required for a production, meetings are organised. These meetings represent an occasion for the team member to understand each other's role and to get to know the freelancers involved in the project.

“We usually have a production meeting at the beginning of the production where the concepts are shared with all the production staff and everyone is introduced for example the costume designer if there is one [...]. All the people involved in the production, the Composer if there is a Composer, Light Designer if there is one and so on.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

Moreover, during the first meeting deadlines and expectations are set and shared. Lastly, as it emerges from the interview with the Production Assistant, she perceives that changes are frequent and adjustments are required. For these reasons, during following meetings expectations are reset to respect the timeline.

“Things change during the creative process and it is very difficult that the starting idea, the starting point remains the same throughout the creative process. Sometimes things change, sometimes the budget needs to be adjusted but after a preliminary discussion that happens before, the budget is set, the concept is set and there is a timeline and the idea is to make things happen within this framework. But of course, the time-line is something that cannot be changed. The budget also, but things can be adjusted depending on the request.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

From the interviews, it can be understood that employees experience that the change of leadership has had an impact on the work practices of the different projects. The Production Assistant mentioned that in comparison to before where work was carried out mostly independently, now she perceives it to be more interconnected.

“I have noticed that before people were very responsible and all the work was very project-based like for example I am in charge of this project and I do the task related to this project and I’m the only one responsible for that. Instead now the things are more, not mixed, but are more interconnected the one to the others, it’s still very flat like is not that there is someone that you have always to refer. But things need to be approved before moving on. For example, I am an assistant so I cannot make decisions by myself. I always have to relate or refer to someone, but in general this is not felt like something wrong. It is as it has to be.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

As a consequence, in order for them to facilitate interconnected work most employees feel that “transparency” and “openness” are required. The organisational culture could support and facilitate the project work of the team. However, although those are values that were used to describe the organisational culture by some, from the answers provided by others it seems that they are still working on reaching the desired level of transparency. The Production Assistant for example referred to the culture as “transparent-want-to-be”, which implies that efforts are currently made but that there is still room for improvement.

“The culture, at least in the management side I can say, is flat, open and transparent-want-to-be (haha) so the idea is to be very transparent and we are working on that.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

To summarize, our data indicate that all the employees at DDT identify the company as a Project-based organisation. According to their words, roles are defined and negotiated at the beginning of

each production together with deadlines and expectations, as they vary depending on what is requested for a specific project.

Furthermore, interviewees highlighted that although they mainly carry out work and tasks in an independent way due to the flat hierarchy that characterises the company, it is fundamental for the success of a production to keep in mind the overall objectives, being therefore aware of what the other crew members are working on.

Lastly, participants identified the change of artistic directorship as the reason for the current changes in work practices. According to them their responsibilities are more interconnected compared to the past. For this reason, they feel that a more transparent organisational culture would support the employees to the adaptation of the new practices.

4.2.4 Understanding of current challenges

As presented in the previous section, interviewees perceived a change in working methods, highlighting a higher reliability on other co-workers compared to the past. When asked if they found this process challenging, the answers among the interviewees were similar. It appeared that there is unclarity about job titles as roles and tasks seem not to be clearly defined. This aspect was especially evident from the Artistic Director's point of view:

"You know before I came the company had of grown organically over time, meaning people to a large degree designed their own positions. It was very unclear to me when I came what people were actually doing because they did not even have a job description in their agreements. So, it took a long time to figure out that. It has a natural explanation because it is a small company, if a dancer needed something somebody would be "okay I'll do it". Like or "no I don't want to do that" (Artistic Director, 2020)

This aspect is not only visible from the leadership side but also among the employees. In fact, as mentioned by the Stage Manager, by being a small company instead of explicitly attributing responsibility among team members, just the main role is defined and all the other activities are distributed from a production to the other depending on the availability of the single ones. This represents for them in the long run a challenge as it leads to unclarity.

"As we are quite a small company, each person in the administration/production has a major role and then many, many other roles after that. I would say that everyone's major role is very clear. But

at this time, all of the other roles are not clear at all, and this is something that has been left over from before Pontus Lidberg started as Artistic Director.” (Stage Manager, 2020)

Moreover, another aspect mentioned during the interviews as a challenge is the internal communication. As explained before in the section on project management, the employees perceived more interdependence of departments, for this reason the already established ways of communicating became less effective. Therefore, communication is now defined from the interviews as something problematic.

“We are very small organization as you have understood already. I think that, the issues that came out, came up lately were always related to problems of communication. So, I think that if we fix that all the rest can just become smother. I cannot really think about anything else. I am pretty sure there are other things that can be improved, but so far I think this is the main issue that we have to fix.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

When trying to understand what the interviewees intended when mentioning “problems of internal communication”, we understood that they mainly referred to information and knowledge sharing issues. According to their words, information gets lost and is not properly shared among all the employees. This leads on a long run to a loss of resources for the company, especially in terms of efficiency and time.

Specifically, both the Artistic Directors and the different managers perceive the communication between different departments as not effective. For instance, words such as “wall” have been used during the interviews from some participants, as indicating evident difficulties in sharing essential information among different departments. To overcome this issue, the interviewees said that they are currently organising weekly meetings. The meetings are understood by the organisational members to have the purpose to update on the status of the activities among the different departments and to clarify what is still undefined. However, it appears that differently from what was expected, the interviewees don’t feel these meetings to be really efficient. It is perceived as if there is still a barrier in obtaining information not supported by a clear and effective system. Furthermore, the Artistic Director feels that, despite the time invested in the meetings, employees still need to refer to him constantly to get access to information. As discussed in the section on the understanding of roles at

the Danish Dance Theatre, this has been perceived by the Artistic Director as a slow-down process element.

“We have the Thursday meetings then most of the day when I am in the office either people come in and ask questions or sometimes most equally send emails which is also something I really need to change. I get like sometimes 100 emails a day and it is really just a chat most of them. I think we have to move to a different way, just because I become a human spreadsheet, moving information around.”
(Artistic Director, 2020)

From the interviews, it can be understood that a solution to the above mentioned issue could be an improvement of the management software used. According to them, by implementing among the company a unique system, word documents and excel files could be substituted and information could be better communicated.

Moreover, from what can be understood from the words of the Stage Manager, assigning to somebody in the team the responsibility of improving the internal communication would increase its effectiveness. At the current stage, it is the Artistic Director the one that increased awareness about this problematic in the company and is responsible for it.

“I have been in the company for a very long time and for much of this time, the internal communication has not been good, because there never has been anyone who was in charge of it. At the moment, the Artistic Director has taken charge and I can see that it is getting better and better. He knows what he wants, and he knows what he is doing, and that makes it a lot easier for the rest of us to interpret his ideas and go further with them” (Stage Manager, 2020)

To sum up, the DDT is currently facing some challenges. First, the unclarity about job titles and responsibilities increases the perception of uncertainty among the participants, leading to a decrease in efficiency. As a result of the unstructured way of dividing tasks, the company is facing a loss in resources. Secondly, most interviewees mentioned that the internal communication represents for them a challenge. By analysing the interviewees words, it appeared clear that with the term “internal communication” they were referring to the problem encountered in the information and knowledge sharing among the different departments. As solutions advanced by the employees two emerged. The first was the implementation and usage of more specific and ad hoc software. The second referred to

increase of responsibility level among employees as a way to increase awareness and obtain improvements.

4.2.5 DDT current changes

During the interview, it appeared that the Danish Dance Theatre has faced important changes in the last years. The change of artistic directorship for instance, has driven towards a need for restructuring and redefinition. With the arrival of the Artistic Director in the company and with the change of leadership, the perception among the interviewees, both from the artistic and from the administrative staff, is that in order to adapt to the new vision and to achieve goals, change is required. When speaking about change we generally obtained positive responses and acceptance among interviewees, which implied a positive attitude toward this ongoing process. Some of them expressed that change was expected with the appointment of the new Artistic Director/CEO and therefore it did not come as a surprise.

“I think it’s normal when you have a change like this, such an important change that things are changing also from an organizational point of view.” (Productions Assistant, 2020)

The first important change that the Danish Dance Theatre is currently facing seems to be the re-definition of organisational structure. As mentioned by the Artistic Director, when first entering the organisation, he found the understanding of the job titles challenging, as well as to recognise who was responsible for a specific task. He perceived a lack of clarity and definition, which was leading toward difficulties in understanding the level of responsibility of employees. For the Artistic Director, this lack of clarity was creating confusion and leading to difficulties in setting expectations.

“I am pushing it more towards clear roles where it is more clear who does what. Which also means that people have to take more responsibility I think because it is their area of work.” (Artistic Director, 2020)

It seems that the Artistic Director’s concerns are about the need to find another figure with a similar modus operandi in order to deliver the projects with flexibility and coherence. In the interviews the Artistic Director mentioned that the current business manager will soon leave the company and expressed his expectations regarding the ideal profile he is picturing for this company. From what can be understood from the Artistic Director’s words, it is important to find someone that can share

some of his responsibilities, his vision and that can, in case of necessity in the future, substitute him while he is abroad:

“When we find a new kind of business manager... he/she has to be somebody who really understands this and with whom I work very closely. I mean, I work very closely with the Business Manager now, but according to an old model in a way. She is very much support, but it will have to be even more so because it will have to be somebody who really can step in I think.” (Artistic Director, 2020)

During the interview, it was recurrently mentioned the Artistic Director’s absence from the office due to frequent travels, as it is typical for roles of this kind and in line with the overall goal of becoming more internationally recognised. This aspect together with the high reliability of the employees on the Artistic Director could be a reason for finding new ways.

Our overall impression is that the company is understanding and adapting to the new internal structure setting. Administrative and artistic staff are working along with the Artistic Director in order to create a better sub-division of work, tasks and roles: *“You know we have made this plan which was the mapping of the existing organization and now there is a new one that we still have to finish about the new organizational structure. And in there, there are some assigned new responsibilities. And they of course will need to be clearly communicated soon.” (Artistic Director, 2020)*

However, the Artistic Director has highlighted that, despite the general positive attitude that can be found in the company, some tension and resistance has been perceived. Specifically, he referred to the dissatisfaction of the Marketing Department.

“There is like a wall a really real wall between the marketing department and the production and that wall I see it happening you know because it's like one side does not know what the other side is doing. [...] the marketing they were really unhappy with that. They really did not like that.” (Artistic Director, 2020)

Another important issue the company is currently working on is the internal communication. As mentioned in section 4.2.4, the previous ways of communicating are not effective anymore leading to loss of information inside the company. Information and knowledge are not shared properly among the company as mentioned by the Artistic Director. During the conversation, he often described that sending information through emails, forgetting to share with all the interested members, or saving

documents in their personal folders was an obstacle for the company limiting access to updated information.

“Working in a different way where we don’t send documents to each other and emails as much of course it is a completely different way of communication on a daily basis. That should change the way we work and how people work.” (Artistic Director, 2020)

When we asked how they were planning on overcoming this problem of knowledge loss, the interviewees highlighted that they have recently implemented in the company new software among the administrative side. This choice will, according to what started during the interviews, enable a more effective and structured way of sharing information in the long run.

“For example we are trying to implement office 365 and use of a task manager, not only for myself but for the project itself, not a project management software but a task management with tasks related to the project would help a lot in visualizing who is doing what and where things are.” (Production Assistant, 2020)

Therefore, from what can be understood from the findings the DDT is currently facing important changes in terms of organisational structuring and internal communication practices. Specifically, the DDT, driven by the Artistic Director desire is currently redefining the roles that the different employees have inside the company. Whereas, regarding the internal communication problems that interviewees referred to, the company has decided that to overcome this issue they would have implemented new tools and software.

5. Discussion

The purpose of this section is to bridge our findings with what is presented in the Theoretical Framework that would allow us to investigate and get new insights into our research problem. In the previous chapter, our Findings were presented highlighting two main themes: the first one is the Understanding of Organisational Identity at the Danish Dance Theatre; the second one is the internal Perception of Organisational Change at DDT. We decided to structure this chapter following these two themes' divisions. In the first one, theories on Organisational Identity will be linked with our findings on the understanding of the DDT mission and vision, on the understanding of the elements that characterise the contemporary dance company, on the participant's understanding of the role of image and culture in the definition of identity, and on their understanding of identity change. In the second one, theories on Project Management, Temporary Organisations are used to frame our findings on the understanding of the members of DDT as a Project Management Organisation, and on the understanding of their roles at DDT focusing as well on the current challenges and changes mentioned by the interviewees.

5.1 Understanding of Organisational Identity

In cultural institutions, it is common to find two executive leaders inside the company: the artistic director and the business director. This dual executive leadership phenomenon is not unusual for creative and cultural institutions, as they have been described in the literature to be paradoxical (DeFilippi et al., 2007; Lampel et al., 2000) due to their requirement to balance decisions between financial viability and artistic excellence (Caves, 2000; DeFillippi et al., 2007; Jones et al., 2006; Lampel et al., 2000). In the case of the DDT, all the responsibilities are incorporated into a single person. Pontus Lidberg, in fact, is not only the Artistic Director as well as the house choreographer, but he also has the title of CEO of the company. Traditionally, leadership is considered as a one-person phenomenon. Locke et al. (2007) argue in favour of unitary executive leadership because having a single person in the leadership side allows the generation of a more coordinated vision. As our findings support this aspect in the case of the DDT, it can be said that vision is coherent among the company. Interviewees seemed to share a common understanding, especially of the artistic vision.

Organisational identity, as discussed in the literature review, is the central, distinctive, and enduring characteristic of an organization. Therefore, Whetten (2006) identifies organizational identity claims as the central, enduring and distinguishing attributes (CED attributes) used by the members when referring, acting or speaking on behalf of the company. Some of these characteristics are highly stable whereas others may vary depending on the shifts in the environmental circumstances. This conception was reflected in our findings too. Many interviewees in fact incorporated this insight, highlighting the three attributes when speaking of organisational identity. Participants highlighted distinguishing organisational features by comparing them with other similar companies in the dance industry. Specifically, the members focused on the “size”, the “flexibility” and the “stability” that characterize the DDT in comparison to other dance companies in the north of Europe. As for central definitional standards, what emerged from our findings is that members of DDT identified “quality”, “passion” and “motivation” as essential knowledge about the company. Lastly, a legitimate identity claim of the participants was connected with the fact of being a “contemporary” dance company. The “contemporary” element resulted as embedded in the organisational history as it has withstood the test of time, and therefore, it meets the enduring definitional standard.

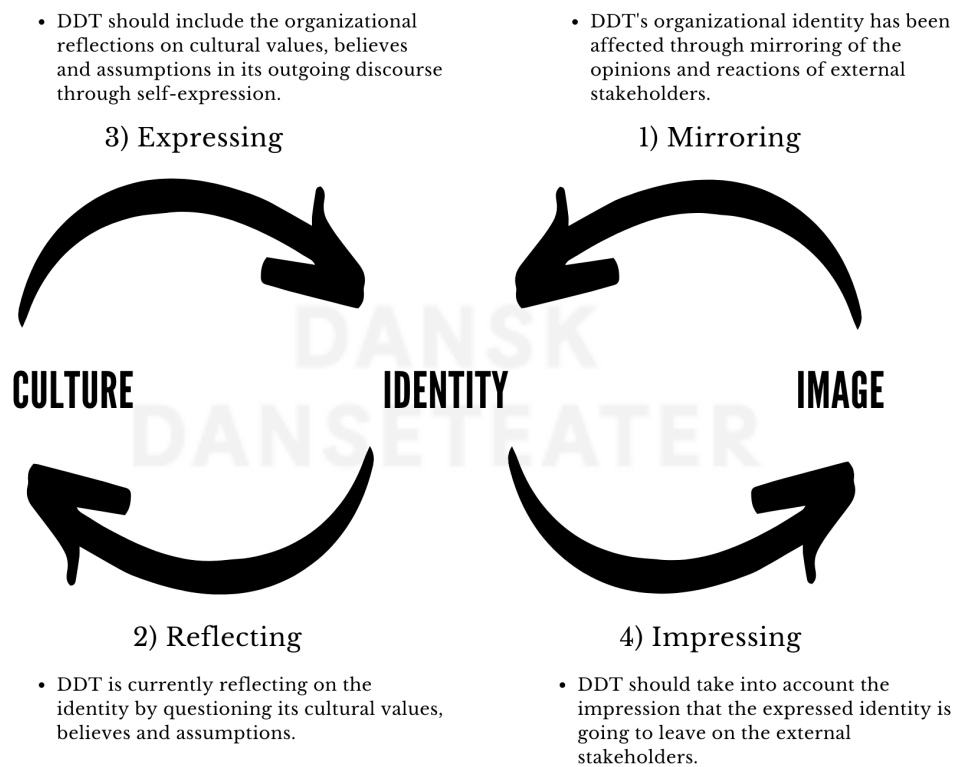
Moreover, our findings can be said to be in line with the Social Actor Perspective of the institutional theory (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006) in regards to the members’ understanding of the organisational identity. Their understanding is based on both internal and external factors (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006) as for example their confrontation with the Royal Danish Theatre or with the audience. These two elements are involved in both internal factors, as culture and vision, and in external factors, as the type of offer for the clients or reputation. Therefore, it can be said that for the employees the meaning of their organisation is given collectively among the relation with others not only within the members. More precisely, this identity meaning construction is aligned with the Social Actor Perspective presented by Ravasi and Schultz (2006). It emphasizes the function of sensegiving, which consists of managerial actions that link identity construction to internal and external elements, as coherence, rooting history or relation among other organisations. These claims about identity meaning are engaged by organisational leaders and then used to shape the collective understanding of the organization (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006). As organisational leaders provide sensegiving actions, when describing the identity attributes of DDT, most of the interviewees referred or mentioned the Artistic Director, as to highlight his influence in the identity sensegiving process.

This conceptualization can match the Neoinstitutionalists theory (Pedersen & Dobbin, 2006), which is usually associated with an internal flexibility orientation, an element that has been stated in our findings as a distinguishing element of DDT. Identity from this point of view is based on institutional claims that influence the members' perception of the company's attributes. These features provide the members with a legitimate and consistent narrative that shapes the construction of the collective sense of self (Czarniawska, 1997; Whetten & Mackey, 2002).

Differently from Whetten (2016) construct of identity, most interviewees incorporated organisational culture and image in the definition of the DDT identity. This is in line with the argumentation which stems from organisational identity studies, specifically the work of Hatch and Schultz (2002) on the dynamics of organisational identity. This process-based model includes both culture and image to understand how internal and external definitions of organisational identity interact. This model extends Mead's ideas about the concepts of "I" and "Me" to identity processes at the organisational level of analysis. Organisational identity is created, maintained and changed as a result of the dynamic interaction of four processes which connect identity and image, respectively *mirroring* and *impressing*, as well as linking identity and culture through *reflecting* and *expressing* (Figure 5.1). As mentioned both in our case delimitation and our methodology section, due to time constraints we decided to limit our analysis only on the internal understanding of the company by interviewing internal members. Therefore in our findings, it emerges what members understand and perceive as external factors and opinions.

Organizational identity, as explained by the authors, is reflected in a mirror held up by the opinion of external stakeholders such as for example, media and audience. As a consequence, organisational identity is affected through *mirroring* of the opinions and reactions of others (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). These might cause a reaction and motivate organizational members to change in order to reduce the discrepancies between their understanding of the external perception and what for them is the essence of the company. In the case of the DDT, participants have mentioned during the interviews their perception of external stakeholders' opinions of the company. An aspect that emerged is the elderly age average of their audience that seems to be, as they defined it, of a "conservative" kind. They have noticed a low involvement of young people and have associated this aspect to the low appeal that the artistic contents might have on them. The external perception can be said not to be in line with the internal understanding of the essence of the company. Another interesting finding is that the company, in the past, has never been invited to important and recognised events in the dance

world outside Denmark, but was invited to perform just on minor stages. This aspect was not in line with the members' aspiration of gaining international recognition. The members' identification of discrepancies, that emerged during the mirror process, has led to a process of self-examination, having direct effects on identity.



(Figure 5.1)

As presented in the model, members are pushed to revisit and reconstruct their organisational self of sense in a process of self-definition that also includes the organisational culture (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). This is because companies do not just accept what others say about them, but they compare it with who they perceive they are (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). When this happens, identity is reinforced or changed by the process of *reflecting*. The company should, in fact, reflect on identity in relation to the cultural values and assumptions (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). The values and beliefs of the DDT seem to be a current matter of reflection and redefinition, not only for the reasons mentioned above connected to the external shareholder but, as highlighted from our findings, also because of the change of leadership. Some participants defined the current stage as a “transitional phase” in which “*the company's values are not found equally throughout the company yet.*” (Dancer 1, 2020).

The third process involves the expression of identity through cultural understanding, referred by the authors as *expressing* (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). These organizational reflections on values and beliefs should, according to the authors, become part of its outgoing discourse through a process of self-expression. Cultural self-expressions include references to the collective identity (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Jenkins, 1996) and become a mean for members to speak about themselves as an organisation to the external stakeholders (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). By communicating organisational identity, an emotional response is generated. *Centaur* would have represented an important opportunity for the DDT, as it would have offered the possibility to express the new values and beliefs by communicating them to external stakeholders. The usage of AI technology would represent the expression of this internal process of redefinition. Moreover, they could be able to increase the audience's sympathy, stimulate awareness and encourage their involvement and support in the future.

Lastly, the expressed identity leaves impressions on others (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). As said by Rindova and Fombrun (1998) identity is projected to external stakeholders attempting to convey a sense of organisational identity. This brings back organisational culture and its expressions regarding image and external influences. Hence, the efforts of the organisation to impress others are subordinated by the impressions that others take from outside sources (Hatch and Schultz, 2002).

In order to avoid dysfunctions and being vulnerable, the DDT should take into account the link that exists between culture and images and be aware of the dynamic process involved in the definition of organisational identity. The manifestation of an imbalanced relation between internal and external powers might lead either to *narcissism* or *hyper-adaptation* (Hatch and Schultz, 2002). The first case occurs when the identity of an organisation refers only to organisational culture, hence the identity construction process involves only *reflecting* and *expression*. *Hyper-adaptation*, on the other hand, occurs when there is a high focus on stakeholder images for the process of self-definition and, on the contrary, cultural heritage is not included. From our findings, it emerges that employees of DDT, when discussing identity, take into account both internal and external aspects, therefore, it can be said that the company is not suffering from dysfunctions of self-referentiality or focus on concerns for their images. However, as members perceive that the company is still facing a transitory phase of self-definition, hence they are still seeking for a balance between the two forces.

There are different studies that show how environmental changes can have effects on the identity of an organisation (Ravasi & Shultz, 2006; Bouchikhi & Kimberly, 2003; Brunninge, 2004).

Technological changes are identified in the literature as environmental ones that have led to an important transformation of society and cultural institutions in the past years (Pedersen et al., 2020). Despite the important changes that the DDT is currently facing in terms of implementation of new technologies, our findings highlight that the members do not perceive it as being the reason for the redefinition of organisational identity. Interviewees do not identified the AI technology implementation in the *Centaur* production as having direct effect on organisational identity, but instead to be a consequence of the change of artistic directorship in line with the new artistic vision. Therefore, technology, in this case, seems to be in function of the new artistic vision which is the element leading to a redefinition of organisational identity. As can be understood from the findings, the choice of bringing AI on stage is connected with the desire to reach a broader audience and to speak to the entire society. As mentioned above, when presenting Whetten (2006) CED attributes, an enduring characteristic of the company is “being contemporary” and hence, to bring innovation and to follow modern trends and issues. This aspect has been highlighted by the Artistic Directors’ words: *“We are a contemporary artistic institution so we should be interested in contemporary issues. AI, for example, is something we are all immersed in, whether you are technological or not.” (Artistic Director, 2020).*

Therefore, from our perception of the research, employees and members of Danish Dance Theatre understand the implementation of new technology on their identity as something new but related and connected to their intrinsic sensemaking of the company's existence and goals.

The technological implementation seems to have been perceived positively from the participants. Organisational members have used positive words when describing it, showing their hopes and expectations associated with it. This shows the member’s aspiration of creating something new, setting the stage for what the company will do in the future. Companies should in fact be driven by aspirations, which serve the function to motivate all the members top to bottom (Jagersma, 2007). With the lead of the new Artistic Director, employees seem to have a clear and homogeneous idea of the direction the company wants to take and how to achieve the desired results.

As emerged from our findings, interviewees perceived that this process of self-definition was initiated and driven by the new Artistic Director. In fact, in 2018 the company faced the change of artistic directorship with the appointment of Pontus Lidberg. As typical for performing arts institutions, the different projects are planned years ahead, therefore the imprinting on the company of the new Artistic Director is becoming more visible especially in recent times. As it emerges from the findings,

employees' perception is that there is an overlap between the Artistic Director's identity and the dance company's one. This is in line with what stated above about the Social Actor Perspective of the institutional theory, as identity claims are proposed by organisational leaders, that provide members with a legitimate narrative to construct a collective sense of self (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006).

Another interesting perspective on the role of the artistic leader can be found in "Three Conceptualizations of Creative Leadership in the Organizational Literature", theorized by many scholars and presented in the Manimelis, Kark and Epitropaki's article (2015, pp. 397). Briefly, these conceptualizations regard: the leader's role in fostering the creativity of others in the organizational context, the creative leader as the primary source of creative thinking and behaviour, the leader's role in integrating his or her creative ideas with the diverse creative ideas of other professionals in the work context. The third conceptualization is the one that is the most representative of the Danish Dance Theatre's case. This aspect is not unusual for the creative industries as they are dealing with new forms of work seeking novelty and originality in their products as well as have to deal with challenges of being temporary organisations. Hence, it is a natural consequence that the leader (Artistic Director role) gives his/her imprinting on the group of experts and professionals in order to collaborate for the creation of the project. Dunham & Freeman (2000) consider this approach typical in theatrical settings (Manimelis, Kark & Epitropaki, 2015). In fact, this can be understood from the event reported by the employees in the interviews: when Lidberg has taken charge and, moreover, when his first production *Centaur* was born, the enduring concept of being "contemporary" has been introduced along with the technology element by him. At first, the Artistic director could be considered as the "primary creator" (Manimelis, Kark & Epitropaki, 2015), however, from what emerged from the interviews, other organisational members play an important role in the creative process, contributing with artistic inputs. Therefore, the Artistic director could be said to "facilitate" the creative process by influencing and providing an artistic direction (Manimelis, Kark & Epitropaki, 2015). Our findings highlighted that the Artistic Director is the leader of the company and, as such, he has decisional power on the production, even if he gladly wants and stimulates the creative contribution of the others.

5.2 Perception of organisational change at DDT

Common to the general understanding is the fact that the DDT is identified by its members as a project-based organisation. From our findings it emerges that, although the Danish Dance Theatre is

a stable dance company that operates all year around, temporal systems are created around each production, involving both the internal staff and the external freelancers. The DDT can be said to be an action-driven unit designed to create original productions in a specific temporal setting. The “temporary element” that characterizes project-based organisations is described by Lundin and Söderholm (1995) in “A theory of the temporary organisation”. The authors refer to four organisational aspects of temporary organisations that make them distinguishable compared to permanent ones. This 4Ts-framework refers to *time*, *task*, *team* and *transition* elements.

According to the authors Lundin and Söderholm (1995), as *time* is a limited resource it is a more crucial aspect compared to a permanent organisation. It is not infinite and connected with future and eternity but on the contrary, it is “always running out”. In that sense, DDT can be identified as a temporal organisation. Every production has a specific beginning and end. Additionally, as it is typical for these kinds of organisations, time at DDT can be said to be divided into distinct phases, where each phase corresponds to a specific set of actions to be carried out (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Specifically, as confirmed by the employees, each production involves an ideation phase, rehearsal period and mise en scene, plus routines around these phases are mostly repeated through the different productions. To set a time horizon, at the beginning of each project a timeline is defined. During the first meeting in fact, the employees of DDT and the crew members involved in the production define deadlines in order to deliver the project on time.

The second organisational aspect typical of a temporary organisation and that defines DDT is the *task*. Tasks are the main motivation for the creation of temporary organisations, their raison d'être, and thus legitimise their existence (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). This is applicable also to a temporary organisation within permanent structures, as it is for the case at hand. The reason for its existence is for the DDT the creation and mise en scene of original productions and therefore, the organisation is made legitimate through them producing new and novel pieces every year. The “original” and “novel” aspects have been highlighted in the course of the interviews as distinctive elements present in the DDT. The company is not buying and interpreting existing pieces, but it creates them. Therefore, the creative process is the heart of the company and the production of new pieces is its essence. Furthermore, the authors distinguish between two different kinds of tasks at the heart of temporary organisations. Tasks can be either *unique* or *repetitive*. In the first case, the creation and existence of the temporal system are connected to one specific situation and thus will not occur again. On the other

hand, the *repetitive* element that characterizes the other kind leads to the repetition of it in the future (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). Within this framework, the DDT would be classified as a repetitive temporary organisation, as productions are ongoing, therefore the task can be said to be “standardized character” of the company and not a “once-in-a-lifetime affair” (Lundin & Söderholm, 1995). As the task is repetitive, the members rely on the experience and on the common understanding and interpretation of the situation.

The third organisational aspect that differentiates temporary organisations from the permanent ones is the *team*. Teams are always formed around the task, that in the case of DDT is the production of new pieces. The DDT, when a skill is missing inside the company they have to outsource it. The people involved in the project are selected by the Artistic Director according to the knowledge and skills required for a specific production, aiming at creating synergies from which the company will benefit. Our findings highlight a strong reliance of the company to the network of the creative leader. This aspect is in line with what presented in the literature, connecting the team with external sources of information to gain new ideas and include them in the work context (Mumford et al., 2002, 2014; Rickards & Moger, 2000). Therefore, the Artistic Director could be defined as Creative Broker (Manimelis, Kark & Epitropaki, 2015). For the *Centaur* production, the AI technology was designed and programmed with the help of the expertise of an external professional, Cecilie Waagner Falkenstrøm, in order to give more prestige and to raise the performance level as well. In fact, especially if it regards a temporary organisation, outsourcing helps to lower the costs and to be more innovative (Green & Miles, 2007).

Finally, differently from permanent organisations, the temporary ones have a final distinguishing aspect that is *transition*. As temporary organisations are strictly dependent on the task, a “before” and “after” effect can be found, and change is expected as a result of the organisation. This aspect is less present compared to the previous organisational aspects, as processes are repeated at DDT. Hence, as soon as a production finishes a new project begins, showing more a circularity of process rather than a linear conception of time typical of temporary organisations. Thus, this “before” and “after” transitions described by Lundin & Söderholm (1995) are not distinct in the Danish Dance Theatre case. This duality of being a permanent and temporary organisation is an interesting characteristic of the Danish Dance Theatre.

Gersick (1995) investigated in “Everything new under the Gun: Creativity and Deadlines” how temporary organisations, which are characterised, as mentioned in the previous paragraph, by limited time, specific task and different team, are able to produce novel works and hence be creative under pressure. As in the case of the DDT, difficulties can be encountered during the creative process as creativity is “*chancy and non-rational*” (Gersick, 1995, pp. 144) and these attributes are in contrast with time limitations the company has to face. Therefore, differently from the dominant logic where the development is a universal sequence of incremental steps of constant progressions (Tuckman, 1965), the DDT works in phases that we have identified as *Ideation phase*, *Rehearsal period* and *Mise en Scene*. Time in the company seems to be marked by the approach of the end of a phase and the shift in the new one. This segmentation of time in separate eras is supported by what Luchins (1940) calls the *Einstellung effect*. Hence, by having time series and working on different tasks in different moments, it is easier for people to find problem-solving strategies and meet the set deadlines. As presented by Gersick (1995), there are some facilitators for obtaining creative outcomes while still respecting the set timeline.

The first point presented by the author concerns the start of the production when different people start working on a new project elaborating new ideas. Goals have to be set to provide a direction, leaving however room for digression to challenge the participant’s inventiveness (Hackman & Walton, 1986). In the case of DDT, this corresponds to the *Ideation phase*. It is during this phase that the Artistic Director presents to the members the ideas and concepts behind the project. These initial ideas have been defined by the Artistic Director as the “general goals” that need to be achieved. Employees at DDT are then challenged by the leader to find creative and *ad hoc* solutions for the company.

The second aspect is what Gersick (1995) defines as the *First Period of Momentum*. In this process, original ideas are built up and presented to the group that will subsequently draw upon. The ideas should not be the final ones as obtaining the end’s result is a process that involves all the team. This is in line with what the DDT’s members described as *Rehearsal period*. Dancers together with the choreographer go through the original ideas, finding new ways of presenting it on stage. From this process of co-creation, when the ideas of the choreographer meet the abilities of the dancers, compromises are found.

There is always a *Midpoint* in the process, where choices have to be made. By asking questions such as “where we are” and “where we need to be”, the companies are able to get an overview of the situation, finalise their choices and move to a more executive side to meet the set deadlines. From our

findings, it emerges that after the studio time, the midpoint for the company occurs during the third phase, the *Mise en Scene*. In order to be able to meet the final deadline and bring the production on stage, all the team members need to gain definitive information and to share efforts, so to finalise the project.

Lastly, *setting stable deadlines* is what enables teams to organise their work around them (Gersick, 1995). The DDT, during the first meeting, sets a time horizon to enable crew members to create expectations and organise the work.

As the purpose of our research was to investigate the implications of the implementation of new technologies in regards to the influences these developments had on creative work, we wanted to understand the perception that participants had on the effects over their roles. It emerged that, in the context of the *Centaur* production, roles in the DDT were not affected by the usages of AI technology in an unusual way compared to the previous projects. General flexibility and adaptability to the company's needs were perceived from the interviewees' words, therefore *Centaur* did not seem unusual and did not require extra attention compared to previous productions. These findings are in line with the *negotiated order perspective* presented by Bechky (2006), that characterises project-based and temporary organisations. This theory focuses on how social order is reconstructed repeatedly through interaction and negotiation. In the Danish Dance Theatre case, when a new production starts, the team is formed and external freelancers are hired, a generalised role structure seems to be adopted. The internal employees, thanks to previous experience in the company, have some guidelines for relationships with the new crew members and for the tasks they will have to deliver. In the initial phase of the creative process when the crew members meet for the first time, the roles are negotiated, defined and communicated, as mentioned during the interviews. Specifically to *Centaur*, employees are expecting some changes driven by the use of such a complex technology, but this aspect as already mentioned does not represent an unusual element for them. Their role and their responsibilities in fact change slightly in every project. The "negotiation" aspect where employees have to define and calibrate their role depending on the needs for a specific production has been explicitly expressed by the Sound Designer: "*I usually define my role in the new project and then try to identify the direction and thoughts to put into this project to make sure I will follow along the same path.*" (Sound Designer, 2020).

This system in which participants use changeable roles and skills is perceived inside the company as leading to unclarity of responsibilities and lack of structure. As mentioned by the Artistic Director, the company is aiming at redefining roles and assigning responsibilities in a more clear and structured way. Connecting this aspect to the literature it is possible to look at Whitley's (2006) ideal types of project-based firms. There are two dimensions identified by the author in the context of project-based firms that consider the different levels of learning and the development of firm-specific knowledge as depending on atypicality or on one-off productions and on the level of expertise, of task and of role predictability and stability. One dimension refers to the *singularity* of projects. The DDT, as it has continuity over time involving a stable core group of employees does differ from highly singular project-based firms. This aspect is shown in the finding, as most of the employees referred to the "stability" of the company as a distinctive attribute part of the company's identity. The stability allows the development of distinctive capabilities and reputation that derive from their collective learning. It is true that every production differs from the previous ones in terms of team composition and technicalities. However, as described by the interviewees, the creative process does not vary drastically from production to the other as they have clear routines and defined practices. Moreover, at the end of a production the company does not cease to exist or it is not reduced to a paper entity (Davenport, 2005; Davenport and Czuban, 2005), therefore the employment of the permanent staff is not merely an "administrative convenience" (DeFillippi and Arthur, 1998: 137). Due to this stability aspect, the company could have the possibility to develop distinctive routines and use more standardized techniques to deal with problems. Therefore, the company desire to shift to more pre-established and defined competence, identities and routines is supported and can be found in what Whitley (2006) identifies as companies with high separation and stability of work roles that can be found in craft-dominated sectors.

Lastly, from the interviews, it emerged that members of DDT are experiencing difficulties in the transferability of information and knowledge. This aspect is not unusual in the context of project-based organisations. As can be found in the literature, the characteristics of temporary organisations mentioned in the previous paragraphs may represent an obstacle to the application of company-wide change, development and learning, and it might be an obstacle as well to the management of overall organisation-level processes outside the project (Hobday, 2000; Gann & Salter, 2000). In this context, knowledge development is limited due to timely and monetary restrictions (Söderlund & Bredin, 2006) and companies tend to prioritise short-term results rather than long-term objectives (Koskinen

& Pihlanto, 2008). However, as described before, although the company presents most of temporary organisations characteristics, it has a more stable and permanent structure which would allow improvements in knowledge management inside the company. Knowledge can be defined as a combination of framed experiences, values, contextual information, and expert insight. This provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information (Davenport and Prusak, 1998). If properly managed, knowledge can become a valuable intangible asset for the company (Sveiby, 1997) as it provides constant opportunity for its creation and combination (Davenport & Prusak, 1998). When describing the issues encountered in this context, members referred mainly to software used and their limits. Specifically, they mentioned that information is lost as not properly shared and not properly updated. Important documents seem to be shared through emails in a non-standardised way leading to information loss. From our findings, it can be seen that it is specifically problematic for the information and knowledge sharing among departments. A practical example was provided to us by the Production Assistant which described the difficulties encountered with sharing information with the marketing department. As mentioned by the interviewee, as they work in a parallel manner, they follow different timelines and schedules. As the system in place seems not to be effective, information gets lost: *“Sometimes information was just lost, like very simple information: the starting date of a show. The time of a performance [...] you put it somewhere and the marketing department cannot access to it for many different reasons, because the communication system or just the tool is not made for that. All because of an excels sheet or of a word document with the version problem, and then the updated version”* (Production Assistant, 2020).

Connecting this finding with the literature, it is possible to understand that knowledge is not only embedded in documents or repositories but is also incorporated in routines, processes and practices. Therefore not only the technological aspect should be considered when referring to the management of knowledge, but when defining it DDT should also remember the role that organisational processes, strategy and culture play in this context.

Moreover, it has appeared that another element that may result as an issue for the knowledge management of DDT: the main source of information is highly dependent from the Artistic Director. From what said during the interviews, it seems that all the information is referred and communicated from each department directly to the Artistic Director. Lidberg is considered as a knowledge broker, as an intermediary between and among other employees, however, this phenomena could create a bottleneck problem, because it could create confusion and slowdown of communications flow (Rapp, Bachrach, Panagopoulos, Ogilvie, 2017).

6. Conclusion

In this qualitative study we set out to discover how employees at the Danish Dance Theatre understand the effects of the implementation of new technologies on Organisational Identity and Organisational Change. To answer this question, we conducted semi-structured interviews both with the administrative and the artistic permanent employees of the company. Our main contribution lies in bringing more information on the technologized aspects that are currently impacting the cultural and artistic sector, as the effects of the technology on identity and on organizational change are phenomena not deeply investigated in the literature.

While conducting our study we understood the particular situation this dance company is currently facing, due to the change of Artistic Directorship. This aspect seems to be the driver of all the other changes employees mentioned during the interviews. The shift from one artistic director to another can take a few years to be perceived due to the advance project planning typical of cultural institutions. This “transitory phase” has led to important adjustments in the company because an adaptation to the new leader’s approach was required. Moreover, the DDT faced a shift in terms of artistic vision, which in practise focuses on the audience and technology usage.

As the company has one leader, differently from the dual executive leadership phenomenon that characterises many cultural institutions (Reid & Karambayya, 2009), the mission and vision of the DTT seemed well communicated and shared among the different sides of the company. Although the dual leaders' system can facilitate finding a balance in the paradox between business and creative in these organisations (Reid & Karambayya, 2009), the DDT’s Artistic Director seems to have found a balance in this reality.

Our findings have outlined how members have perceived the change of artistic directorship not only to have an impact on the organisational identity, but also on the organisational structure. They have highlighted the difficulties in defining roles and responsibilities of the employees and issues in internal communication practices. For what concerns role definition, according to participants, in the past they never felt the need for more definition and structure, as they mainly worked independently in an informal way. With the appointment of the new leader, however, employees have experienced an increase in the interconnectivity of their work compared to the past. An implementation of new

processes and routines was required in order to adapt to the needs of the new Artistic Director. As a result, a redefinition of job profiling is required. Internal Communication represents another challenge for DDT's members. As emerged from the gathered data, the company is facing difficulties in sharing information and knowledge between the different departments, slowing the creative process and decreasing the efficiency. In the section on Strategic Advises we will provide the company with some suggestions for improvement regarding the above mentioned issues.

In the following sections, we will present our reflections as the answer to the Research Question. Specifically, we will first describe the employees perception on the effects that the implementation of new Technology had on DDT's Organisational Identity. It will follow an outline of the implications of Technologies on Organisational Change.

6.1 Effects of Technology on Organisational Identity

Thus, technology and innovation seem deriving primarily from the change of artistic directorship, they can be considered as subordinated elements, which have led to practical changes in terms of novelty, tools and expertise in the creative process. We believe that the Artistic Director's goals for the DDT have changed not only the employees' understanding of their role and creative process, but their sensemaking of the image as well. The image given by the Artistic Director is about more awareness on contemporary society issues (e.g. ethics and questions of AI technology), which could affect productions and audience targets. Hence, these elements have shaped members' perception of the identity as deriving from the leader's vision. The willingness to be internationally recognised and the need to reach crosswise the Danish audience, is fulfilled by the innovation brought on stage with AI technology.

As it has been stated, there are change triggers for any organisation, among these there are external environmental factors such as technology development and internal factors as the need for creativity and innovation (Johnson et al., 2008; Lewis, 2011; Pedersen et al, 2020). We have understood that the development of the computational power of AI has imprinted society. Danish Dance Theatre's employees together with the Artistic Director believe that an art's (dance) goal is to use AI in order to reach the contemporary audience. As it has been discussed above, one of their enduring identity elements is "being contemporary" and hence, addressing contemporary issues.

Therefore, from our perception of the research, employees and members of Danish Dance Theatre understand the implementation of new technology on their identity as something new but related and connected to their intrinsic sensemaking of the company's existence and goals. Hence, our findings suggest that technology did not have a direct effect on the Organisational Identity of the DDT, but the appointment of the Artistic Director did. Employees appear to consider the redefinition of organisational identity as a consequence and reflection of the Artistic Director/CEO's understanding of the company's identity. In order to achieve the aim, which is formally stated in their mission and vision, AI technology is perceived as the tool to use now. The Artistic Director is considered as a role that affected the mission and the vision of the Danish Dance Theatre, creating a chain reaction of redefinition of the organisational culture, making this company something exceptional to observe and to study. By including the new organisational reflections on values and beliefs in its outgoing discourse, DDT will be able to impress the external stakeholders and the image they have of the company.

6.2 Effects of Technology on Organisational Change

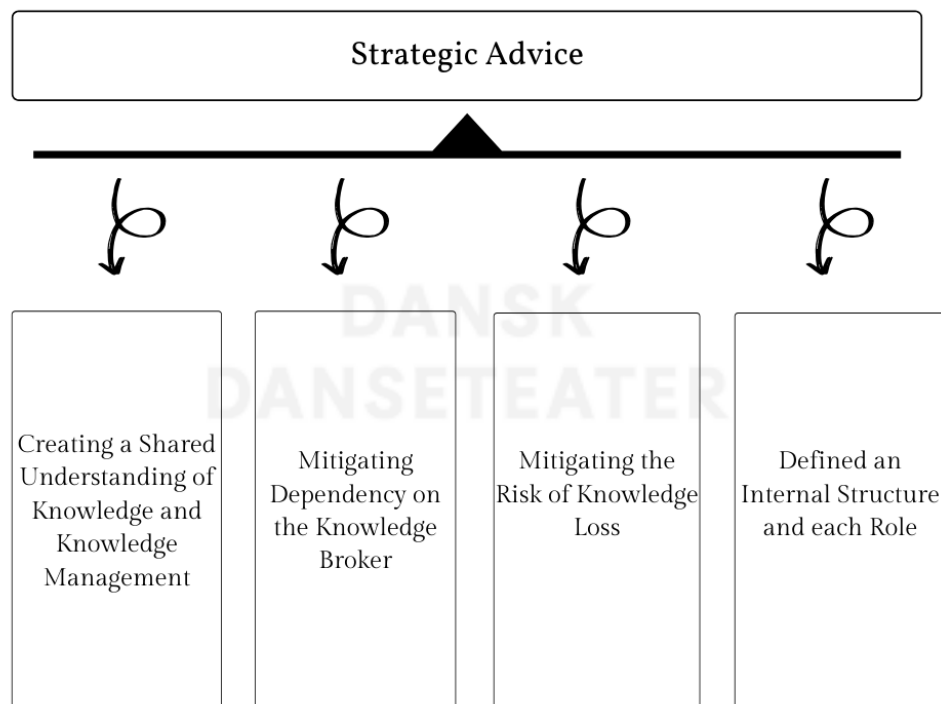
Similarly to the findings on DDT Organisational Identity, employees attributed the changes on organisational structure to the appointment of the new Artistic Director. The switch from one director to the other has initiated a chain effect that resulted in different changes in the company. Therefore, from our findings, it does not seem that the DDT's members associated the change in their roles or working practices to the implementation of new technology, but to the change of leadership. It must be noticed that these events are still happening and are not settled yet. In fact, unfortunately, due to the interruption in the middle of the creative process of the production *Centaur*, the effects of the implementation of new technologies were not entirely visible and understood by the participants. The interviewees described their understanding by stating their expectations and hopes connected with the use of the AI technology in the new production. However, before the interruption of the rehearsal period, they said to not have experienced important changes. It seems to be a transition phase in place, but there is awareness of the novelty and embracement of the new process, although they are still adapting to it. The members who seem to have felt more the impact of AI usage on stage are the Dancers. We understood that it may be strange for them to work in the studio, knowing that there will be another element on stage that is not present yet. During the interview they have described the brief

rehearsal period they experienced before the *Centaur* production suspension. It appears that dancers have to move and act differently compared to previous projects in order to trigger the AI technology.

From the data gathered, it seems that employees have experienced changes in terms of working practices when adapting to the requests of the new Artistic Director. Because of those, a redefinition of roles and responsibilities of DDT's members seems necessary. DDT wants to shift from what Bechky (2006) defines as a *negotiated order perspective* to more stable and defined roles. In the past, the members seemed to have adopted a generalised role structure at the beginning of each project. The specifics of their roles and responsibilities resulted from a negotiation depending on what the production required. This flexible process however, is in contrast with the needs of the company to increase the understanding of roles in order to be effective. Therefore, our findings highlighted that due to the interesting characteristic of the DDT of being a temporary organisation with a permanent staff, the company could successfully carry out the process of restructuring.

6.3 Strategic Advice

Throughout our research, we found that there is some room for improvement for the knowledge management efforts at DDT as well as roles' redefinition. The company could take into account the different approaches that we have presented in Figure 6.1 and that we are going to describe more in detail in the next section. These provided suggestions take into consideration the budgetary and timely restrictions typical of project-based companies, however an initial investment will be required. When evaluating the possibilities we encourage the dance company to take into consideration the long-term benefits and not only the initial costs and resources required.



(Figure 6.1)

We suggest that the company focuses on building a common understanding of what knowledge means for the Danish Dance Theatre as well as for the employees. The company should also create a general understanding of the skills and experiences of the different members, which would result in an increase in awareness. This could be a first step to involve employees in finding new solutions for implementing knowledge management, uncovering how the company could benefit from them.

Moreover, a collective analysis of existing technological systems, organisational culture and practice should follow. At the current stage, DDT seems to be using different software for knowledge sharing which however, was defined by employees as ineffective. An unified and homogeneous system should be implemented among all the different departments in order to effectively share knowledge and updates, preventing knowledge loss. Moreover, finding new strategies on how to build a solid and transparent organisational culture will be crucial to achieve a successful implementation of the new software and processes. To do so, face-to-face meetings are advised, as they would allow the employees to share their experiences and encourage them to provide feedback to each other. The

weekly meetings that DDT is currently holding, could offer the opportunity for the management to coordinate the improvements among the company and encourage cross-departmental communication.

The company should also try to mitigate the dependency on the Artistic Director in terms of knowledge management. From the data we gathered, the company relies heavily on him for information and knowledge sharing and therefore, he can be considered the knowledge broker of the company. The role of the Artistic Director should be clarified inside the company as the employees should be aware of the totality of his duties. Increasing the company's awareness of knowledge flows is the first step to distribute them better among the different departments and to facilitate a more direct knowledge exchange. In order to mitigate the dependency with the Artistic Director and avoid that knowledge passes through this bottleneck, the company should assign responsibilities among the different members, or find a person that can support the Artistic Director and substitute him when he is absent from the office for other duties.

Lastly, the meetings should also represent an occasion for the members to discuss roles and task distribution. We suggest that the company organises for each production a meeting at the beginning of each phase to enable employees to set expectations and make adjustments in case of need. Moreover, the final meeting that is currently organised at the end of each production should represent a moment of reflection and evaluation. By identifying both the synergies created during the project and the difficulties encountered by the members, the company could be able to find more stable routines and define them in a more structured way. This could allow the management to assign roles and distribute tasks by following the employee's feedback, hence based on previous experiences. By identifying the skills and strengths of the different members, and by assigning more defined roles the company could benefit from an increase in efficiency. The time and resources currently invested at the beginning of each production for role negotiation would be avoided.

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