

https://dspace.org/

Professional development through community arts projects: a study of the influence of Thesele Creative Society on the career paths of five people

Mzaku, Thamsanqa

2014-01-22
http://hdl.handle.net10539/13576

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY ARTS PROJECTS:

A study of the influence of Thesele Creative Society on the career paths of five people

Thamsanqa Mzaku

Student Number 580304

Supervisor: Dr Justine Wintjes (Wits School of Arts)

This report is submitted to the Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand, in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

Johannesburg, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Key Concepts and Abbreviations 5

Abstract 8

Acknowledgements 9

INTRODUCTION 10

1. CHAPTER ONE – RESEARCH QUESTION 13

1.1. Aim 13

1.2. Rationale 13

1.3. Research question and significance 14

2. CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW 16

3. CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH METHODS 21

3.1. Sampling 21

3.2. In-depth Semi-structured Interviews with Main Participants 22

3.3. Structured Interviews with employers 24

3.4. Document analysis 25

3.5. Data Analysis 26

3.6. Scope and Limitations 28

4. CHAPTER FOUR – TCS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY ARTS MILIEU 30

4.1. Brief History of TCS 30

4.2. Understanding Community Arts 32

4.3. TCS as a community arts project 33

4.4. Founding ideology 35

5. CHAPTER FIVE – EXPLORING THE INTERVIEWS 39

5.1. Introducing the main participants 39

5.2. An alternative to 'soccer and nothing else' 45

5.3. There was no curriculum 48

5.4. The effects of TCS in career orientation: 'pursuing my purpose more than following any career' 55

5.5. Emergent themes for future research 60

6. CHAPTER SIX - DISCUSSION 62

6.1. Accessibility imperative 62

6.2. Development of professionals 63

6.3. Within the creative economy 71

6.4. Aesthetics of experimentation in the creative economy 77

7. CHAPTER SEVEN – CONCLUSIONS 81

Reference list 87

APPENDICES 95

Appendix 1: 95

Appendix 2: 97

Appendix 3: 102

Appendix 4: 103

Appendix 5: 105

Appendix 8: 108

Appendix 9: 109

Key Concepts and Abbreviations

Abbreviations

ANC	African National Congress
BCM	Black Consciousness Movement
CAP	Community Arts Project
CASA	Culture in Another South Africa
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Union
DAC	Department of Arts and Culture
FUBA	Federated Union of Black Artists
GDH	Gauteng Department of Health
GDS	Growth and Development Strategy
GOMACC	Gauteng Organisation of Community Arts and Culture Centres
ICC	Ipelegeng Community Centre
MGE	Mzansi's Golden Economy
NELM	National English Literary Museum
NPFDCACP	National Policy Framework of the Development of Community Arts Centres and Programmes
NGP	New Growth Path
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Project
TCS	Thesele Creative Society
UDF	United Democratic Front

Key Concepts

Audition

Best of the Laboratory

Career paths

Creative economy

Creative industries

Curtains Up

Fieldworker

Market Lab

Miracle Theatre

Performing Arts

Protean Careerist

White Paper

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report is my own work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts in the Faculty of Humanities at the University of the Witwatersrand. I also confirm that it has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination in any other university.

NAME: _____

SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

Abstract

This report examines the ways in which a community theatre project called Thesele Creative Society (TCS) active in Soweto, South Africa, influenced and broadened the career paths of five people who were directly marginalized by the Apartheid government's policies. I focus on the period from 1991-1995, which corresponds to the transition to democracy, signifying increased accessibility within the country to a variety of career options for black people synchronous with an entry into a differently challenging global economy. In many parts of the world, community arts projects are known to enhance the ability of their participants to successfully participate in the job market and learn skills that are useful in life more generally. South African community arts projects are understood to have played a significant role in, *inter alia*, the economic and skills development of its participants over the last 60 years. Although located in a remote periphery of the arts, culture and heritage sector, with its impact running a risk of being undercounted within the creative economy, TCS proved to be one of the community arts projects with socio-economic bearing. Selected through purposive sampling, the five main participants of this study present intrinsically interesting cases through which I identify the types of skills provided by TCS within the community theatre environment, as well as the methodology employed in transferring these skills. I also show that the background and practice of TCS provides lessons in terms of the application of self-reliance and self-determination principles, and sequentially argue that the application of these principles is necessary for the advancement of many disadvantaged communities in South Africa. I create links between the qualitative data I have collected in the form of interviews with wider issues of creative economies, complementing existing theoretical and ideological studies of community arts practice with a practically grounded approach. This research draws attention to, and demonstrates the importance of, the study of community arts projects, as opposed to community arts centres, which have been the virtually exclusive focus of prior research.

Acknowledgements

My gratitude goes to a number of people, primarily to all the participants of this study for having shared their valuable time and experiences in order to help this study achieve its aim. I also thank Mr Brett Pyper for having alerted me to the existence of Ms Monica Newton who guided me through most of my post-graduate academic life and became my first supervisor in this study. I am not only still intrigued by Monica's sharpness but am also grateful that she shared a tiny little bit of it with me. However, it is my incumbent supervisor, Dr Justine Wintjes to whom I owe the completion of this study. She adopted me with so much patience and dedication – you wouldn't say I was an adoptee – and not only showed me guidance but employed her extraordinary proofreading and editing talents to help polish my writing. Special mention goes to Prof. Cynthia Kros, Mr Colin Glen, Ms Beryl Motlhabane and Ms Jill Waterman for having made time to comment on parts of this report. I also acknowledge the two examiners of this report, Prof. Lize Van Robbroeck and Ms Nicola Cloete for their expert guidance and many useful comments to which I have responded in this final version of my research report.

It is with delight that I appreciate the greatest support I enjoyed from Ms Judy Connors. I am humbled by the time she always gave to proofread and criticise the various sections of this report, and by the financial and moral support she provided when needed the most. For a large part of my tuition fees, credit must go to the Department of Sport, Arts, Culture and Recreation of the Gauteng Provincial Government.

I also thank my love-partner, son and entire family for having borne with me for not paying full attention to all their needs, at this stage of my life.

Lastly, I dedicate this study to my times as a participant of TCS in the mid to late 1990s, and all the people I have met in and through TCS. At the same time, I pay tribute to the founding leader of TCS, the late Mr Sifiso 'Thisha' Ziqubu. I am grateful for the passion for arts, culture and life that he managed to transfer to me.

INTRODUCTION

The contribution of community arts projects within South African society has been steadily gaining recognition and provides a fascinating area of study for researchers. My report makes a contribution to this growing pool of research. Community arts projects, as a global phenomenon, are known for their accessibility, allowing for an open participation of professional artists and community members for training and creative purposes (Van Erven, n/d). Working beyond the confines of traditional cultural institutions such as galleries and theatres, these projects often grow out of collaborations between local artists and local residents and are usually located in community centres or informal venues. Moreover, they often emerge in marginalised communities where socio-economic challenges such as unemployment and crime are prevalent and can help in curbing such challenges (Weitz, 1996).

In the South African context, community arts projects have responded mainly to a lack of access to arts training and related jobs, and to the dearth of recreational programmes available to black communities. Beginning under colonial rule, and particularly enforced by the Apartheid regime (1949-1994), black South Africans were systematically denied any civil rights that would see them as equals of their white counterparts. The Apartheid machinery deprived black communities of the right even to choose a career in the arts via the acquisition of formal training. This had thwarting effects on arts-related career paths for blacks. As a result, although even among white communities careers in the arts tended to be trivialised, the arts added to a list of careers reserved for whites only. In many cases, football and netball were virtually the only recreational activities available for black youth.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the Polly Street Arts Centre and Rorke's Drift Art and Craft Centre pioneered community arts activities in an attempt to alleviate the aforementioned deprivation amongst black communities. Such interventions framed the initial definition of the community arts movement within South Africa in terms of arts-skilling initiatives for blacks. The South African community arts movement, however, experienced a more substantial evolution from the 1970s through to the 1990s. During this period, community arts projects became instruments for a political agenda deployed by both the Apartheid government and those opposing it.

The current government has since identified community arts as a tool that has potential to respond positively to 'two of the [Arts, Culture, Science and Technology[1]] Ministry's most important principles, i.e. providing access and redressing imbalances' (White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage, 1996). Through a socio-economic policy framework known as the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), the government built and/or renovated 42 community arts centres and libraries nationwide. RDP was known for its vigour in redressing infrastructural imbalances of the past, especially in the human settlement sector. The RDP centres added to the pool of existing arts centres such as the Funda Centre and The Community Arts Project (CAP). These were known as independent centres because they neither had a relationship with the previous government nor benefitted within the RDP. Since community arts centres have a history of housing community arts projects, they tend to stand for the entire South African community arts movement, but on the ground this movement comprises many other lesser-known, more informal projects like the one I deal with in this study.

In this study I pay particular attention to a Soweto-based community arts project known as Thesele Creative Society (TCS), which, in its prime, had neither a relationship with any of the 42 RDP centres, nor with the independent ones. TCS operated for many years from within a school and only registered as a legal entity after being in existence for ten years. TCS was not the only community arts project that operated in this even more peripheral zone, and all such projects have run the risk of being miscounted by researchers in the field. This study therefore highlights the complexity of the community arts movement in South Africa and the fact that the full picture cannot be gleaned from formal community arts centres alone.

The concentration of manifestations of the community arts movement within black communities in South Africa has prompted some to perceive the field as being aesthetically designed for blacks. Others have thought of it as nothing more than a mere developmental platform for black aspirants who desire to create artworks of western 'high arts' standards. Others still distinguish it neither along racial divides nor in terms of its position in relation to the high arts, but by its geographic location within a 'community'. Somewhat circularly, they

[1] Until 2002, the Ministry of Arts and Culture was known as the Ministry of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology.

therefore perceive the field of South African community arts as comprising those artistic activities that operate within a certain demarcated area where members of a particular community reside. But all these various perceptions of the South African community arts are important to take note of, because they challenge and destabilise official definitions. Later in this report, in order to attain greater clarity of definition for my purposes, I engage with the writings of community arts researchers such as Lize van Robbroeck (1991, 2004), Eben Lochner (2011), Joseph Gaylard (2004) and Gerard Hagg (2002, 2004, 2010). The definition I employ incorporates the ideology that has informed the community arts movement of South Africa, and takes into account the way in which the movement has evolved over the years.

Collectively, these authors provide a broad understanding of the background, ideology, role and challenges faced by the South African community arts movement. These researchers have at times studied specific centres as case studies, as in the case of Van Robbroeck (1991), who focuses on two centres, Katlehong Arts Centre and Alexandra Arts Centre, and Lochner (2011), whose focal point is CAP. While I pay particular attention to TCS, I intend at the same time to contribute towards a fuller understanding of the big picture of the South African community arts movement. I also draw from the works of Judith H. Weitz (1996), Francois Matarasso (1997) and Edward B. Fiske (1999) that highlight projects that are in some ways similar to TCS but based in the USA. Through their studies, these researchers argue that community arts projects prepare participants for ensuing careers. This report is similarly premised on the understanding that TCS too has played an influential role in the subsequent careers of the five people who are the main participants of this study. I seek answers to the question of how TCS played this instrumental role, and I explore the extent to which participating in TCS has had an effect on their professions.

I begin this study by providing a description of the entire research process, which is detailed in chapters one to three. In chapters four to six I analyse, interpret and discuss data and themes gathered during the research process. I summarise my findings in chapter seven, the final chapter.

1. CHAPTER ONE – RESEARCH QUESTION

1.1.Aim

This study aims to establish how TCS played a role in broadening the scope of career paths available to five participants of TCS in the early 1990s. This will entail looking at the types of skills provided by TCS within the community theatre environment as well as the ways in which such skills were transferred, and exploring the effects of participation in TCS as a community arts project in the longer term.

1.2.Rationale

Despite the restrictions of Bantu Education,[2] individuals in townships such as Soweto occasionally found means to access some of the more remote professions. One iconic example of this phenomenon is the South African cultural export to Broadway, Leleti Khumalo (starring in *Sarafina* in the 1980s), who was discovered within her community-based dance group in KwaMashu, near Durban, KwaZulu-Natal (Payters, 2000). Community theatre was one way in which careers in the cultural arena could be accessed, as the trajectories of Kenneth Mncedisi Nkosi, Tshepiso Ntsoko, Miriam Maphalala and Innocent Xosa, four of the five participants of this study, demonstrate. The fifth participant is Tlalane Jeannette Moletsane whose career path has always been in the corporate environment.

In the post-Apartheid era, the South African White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (hereafter referred to as White Paper) has recognised the critical role of community arts in addressing the imbalances of the past and encouraged the building and renovation of community arts centres in the late 1990s. In a consultative policy draft, Joseph Gaylard and Peter Stark highlight that '[i]nternational evidence (and best practice in South Africa) suggests that community-based arts and culture programming can impact across a very wide range of government's economic… priorities'; these priorities include, amongst others, 'the ability to create new job opportunities with low entry cost across a wide range of abilities and

[2] The education system of the Apartheid South African government that was designed to teach black learners not to aspire to acquire skills that would have them competing for same jobs as white graduates. This system was legislated in terms of the Bantu Education Act 43 of 1953.

interests' and 'the opportunity to provide a local base for skills development and learnerships across the arts and culture' (2009: 7).

However, these assertions have not translated into a policy or strategic framework enabling the practical formation of and reliable support for community arts projects (Gaylard, 2004; Hagg, 2004, 2010). Despite that they have produced competent artists, such projects continue to operate in an unfriendly environment that lacks reliable financial support, proper leadership and management (Lochner, 2010). Also, in the South African context, there is a paucity of literature and robust, statistically supported, data to demonstrate the positive effects of community arts activities, which, Van Erven (n/d: 2) suggests, 'are difficult for even academics to deliver'. This situation could lead to the sector's ultimate collapse, causing our country to lose out not only on its social and economic value but its aesthetic and cultural value as well (Lochner, 2010; 2011; Marschall, 2002). Through this study I seek to contribute towards filling this literature gap.

1.3.Research question and significance

TCS played a significantly influential role in the social and professional lives of the five participants of this study (the 'main participants'). The main participants remain 'protean careerists' (Bridgstock, 2005) more than a decade after their participation in TCS. To what extent were the skills learnt and the teaching methods used at TCS decisive factors in the participants' survival in the unpredictable area of the performing arts, a sector in the creative industries and the highly competitive corporate environment?

The answer to this question could show how effective arts skills can be given to learners in disadvantaged schools that lack necessary arts facilities. TCS, being a project that survived for years in a classroom with only very rudimentary facilities, could provide a model for best practice in this regard. Also, social and economic lessons can be drawn here on how to 'employ available resources to meet the needs of the community' instead of perpetuating an overreliance on monetary resources as a basis to earn a living, given the instability of the current economic system (Korten, 2011; Nyerere, 1968). Thus, the findings of my study will have implications for the sustainable support of the sector through the development of policy and strategic frameworks that seek to address imbalances created by pre-1994 policies and

perpetuated by subsequent economic conditions. Moreover, they could expose possible practical tools which can complement the role of community arts centres in aiding disadvantaged youth to hone self-reliability and career skills for survival.

2. CHAPTER TWO – LITERATURE REVIEW

I have explored the literature following a number of relevant themes. The first theme is the general background, philosophy and progress of community arts projects across artistic disciplines (Van Erven, 2001, n/d; Cohen-Cruz, 2002, 2005; Van Robbroeck, 1991, 2004; Lochner, 2010, 2011; Hagg, 2002, 2004, 2010). As more work of this kind has been published internationally, I will use international literature, namely Van Erven (2001; n/d) and Cohen-Cruz (2002; 2005) as a base from which to build linkages with the available body of literature in South Africa. Van Erven (2001), for instance, examines community theatre projects in Kenya, Philippines, the Netherlands, the USA, Costa Rica and Australia. Because he has been an active participant in community theatre projects in these countries from their commencement to their completion, he is able to carry out a comparative study of these projects on the basis of process and product. On the other hand, the studies of Van Robbroeck, Lochner and Hagg are based in South Africa, where they provide a general overview of community arts movement across regions. In instances where they make use of specific examples, they restrict their attention to projects that operate in infrastructures that are arts-dedicated such as community arts centres. Van Robbroeck (1991), for example, draws our attention to the Katlehong Arts Centre and Alexandra Arts Centre, and Lochner (2011) focuses on the Community Arts Project (CAP). Within the wider picture of the South African community arts movement, this study therefore situates TCS, as a local example that conducted its activities in a classroom, within a space that was far from being formally supported and dedicated for the arts. Arguably, the most recognisable example of this kind was 'Gibson Kente's famous garage drama school in Dube [Soweto]' (Sichel, 2012).

In all the studies mentioned above, whether in South Africa or elsewhere, the importance of the end result does not overshadow the process of developing arts programmes, which is typified by active community participation, whether organised or managed from within the community or from without. These works provide my study with the basis for interpreting the activities of TCS. These readings also assist this study to situate itself in relation to the genesis of community arts viewed from a South African as well as more global perspective.

Within the body of South African literature, I pay particular attention to those dealing with theatre projects. These illustrate the use of theatre in marginalised, alternative and township

settings (Solberg, 1999; Coplan, 2007; Orkin, 1991), and are useful to further interpret and define TCS's activities. Solberg (1999) and Coplan (2007) highlight playwrights Gibson Kente and Sam Mhangwane as figuring among the influential figures in the development of theatre in Soweto from the 1960s to the 1980s. I will further engage with Steinberg (1993) in order to locate theatre within the broader South African performing arts context.

The second theme is the role of community arts projects in the development of skills that are useful for 'earning and making a living', where the concept of 'earning a living' refers to those who acquire a stable income from an employer, and 'making a living' to those that generate their own income from informal self employment initiatives (Webster & Von Holdt, 2005: 22). It has been broadly articulated that community arts programmes can lead to self-development and economic opportunities for participants in marginalised or 'low-income' communities (Matarasso, 1997; Weitz, 1996; Fiske, 1999; Van Robbroeck, 1991; Van Erven, 2001, n/d; Lochner, 2010, 2011). Matarasso tells the story of 'the LAB project (a full time community arts training course by Proper Job Theatre in Batley) [which] had a primary employment aim… and a creditable 31% of participants have secured employment or further education places' (1997: 22). His examples provide further support to substantiate claims that community arts develop the learning capacity of participants and also give participants 'concrete job skills' (Weitz, 1996: 7).

These cases are mostly documented abroad. Where cases are documented in South Africa (e.g. Van Robbroeck, 1991, 2004; Lochner, 2010, 2011), there is insufficient effort to track whether the participants of community arts projects were able to economically sustain themselves subsequent to their participation in these projects. This study is therefore an extension to these works and an endeavour to contribute to the growing documentation of the longer-term effects of community arts.

Various authors also see community arts as a developmental tool, because they distance youth-at-risk from possible criminal activities (Matarasso, 1997; Weitz, 1996; Fiske, 1999; Van Robbroeck, 1991; Van Erven, 2001; Lochner, 2010; Wright et al., 2006; Hagg, 2010; Scripp, 2000; Gasman & Anderson-Thompkins, 2003). By exploring whether the main participants perceived crime as an alternative, this study will further contribute to studies that seek to understand how community arts projects reduce involvement in crime.

Still on the second theme, and also relevant for this study, are authors who have written about the creative industries as role players in the economic development of a country (Markusen & King, 2003; Holden, 2004; Joffe & Newton, 2008) but none of these attempt to explicitly describe the professional performance of former participants of community arts in the creative industries. Given that four of the five main participants in my study work in the creative industries, my study will further highlight the efficacy of artistic skills learnt in this context.

The third theme I explore is 'career pathing' (Schein, 1990) in relation to workers with an arts background. This is an essential aspect of the research question of this study. Publications that look at various ways in which creative workers support themselves from both within and outside the creative industries are ideal for this purpose (Markusen et al., 2006; Higgs et al., 2008; Bille, 2008; Bridgstock, 2005; Joffe and Newton, 2008). In this category of literature, authors unanimously highlight the fact that artists tend to work in different sectors inside and outside the creative industries. Ruth Bridgstock (2005), for example, uses Hall's (2004) phrase of 'career protean' to refer to an artist who adapts their skills in pursuing various career paths; protean careerists are located within the 'boundaryless' career concept (Bridgstock 2005: 19). She also asserts that the nature of the creative industries encourages artists to work in multiple sectors at a time. Markusen et al. (2006) propose that artists should be open to the idea of working in multiple sectors and therefore should strongly develop skills that allow this kind of 'crossover'. They further acknowledge that in developing their careers 'some community artists move from the streets directly into the commercial world' (ibid.: 45). On the other hand, they find, along with Comunian et al. (n/d), that graduates of formal education are not being readily prepared to adapt their skills to 'multiple jobs', and that employers give preference to creative talent over formal education when employing creative workers (Bille, 2008). This study then facilitates the research into community arts projects in which the development of adaptable skills is encouraged without 'remaining detached from the surrounding external art world' (Markusen et al., 2006).

Sandra Haukka's work advances the discourse of career paths in her identification of a variety of skills such as 'team work skills, communication skills, motivation, problem-solving skills, and adaptability as the most important skills and attributes to workplaces'

(2010: 18). The profile of the skills set of the main participants who did not acquire further training will provide insight into the extent to which TCS developed creative 'careerists' who met the requirements of their employers (Bridgstock, 2005).

Several factors motivate artists to follow a certain career path and with which 'we [can] measure career success' (Bridgstock, 2009). Using Derr's (1986) career orientations typology, Bridgstock (2009) argues that 'getting secure' is the most common feature that motivates creatives to follow a certain career path. This refers to job security, benefits, solidity, a sense of identity, order and place as a combination of factors that motivates an individual to follow a certain career path; 'getting high' and 'getting free' are the next most common features, which respectively refer to 'obtaining interest, excitement, challenge, inspiration from work, development opportunities', and 'achieving freedom, individual control over work processes and environments' (ibid). The 'getting secure' career orientation is more common amongst younger artists who are less experienced in the job market. Bridgstock (2009) acknowledges, however, that these findings do not concur with Caves' (2000) theory that 'creative workers may tend to be orientated away from security and recognition/progression (*getting secure* and *getting ahead* orientations), instead preferring interest or challenge (*getting high*)'. My documentation and analysis of the career orientation and possible successes in terms of the career paths of the main participants will add to literature that looks at the professional development of artists.

Finally, the fourth theme is the South African context. Here sources that deal with the history of South African politics and economics, especially their role in the arts sector, will provide this study with a broad contextual foundation, considering that the cultural structures of South Africa are influenced by both the previous and current political settings (e.g. Kros, 2010; Leonard, 1982; Welsh, 2010; Worden, 2011). The role of community arts as an alternative means to educate and create job opportunities can be best understood when put in context. The fact that South Africa had segregation laws made the social, economic and educational role of community arts more significant in black communities than in white communities. Thus, it makes it necessary to locate the specific history of the community arts movement in South Africa, when these are compared to similar movements elsewhere in the world. Leonard (1982), Welsh (2010) and Worden (2011) provide an account of white dominance, focusing predominantly on the inequalities that were masterminded by the

Apartheid Minister of Native Affairs, Dr H. F. Verwoerd in 1952. The creation of black townships was Verwoerd's brainchild, and these were of inferior social standards. Kros (2010) shows how the regime ensured that black people's education remained inferior and prevented blacks from participating in the mainstream economy.

3. CHAPTER THREE – RESEARCH METHODS

In terms of my research aim, I chose to interview the five participants of my study in order to document in detail the ways in which TCS influenced each of them, in terms of an immediate transfer of skills, as well as in terms of longer-term effects. Therefore in order for this study to source knowledge from the experiences of each of these participants, qualitative research methods were essential (O'Leary, 2005). These methods enabled each participant to provide a passionate narrative – based on memory – on how they experienced TCS. Participants were able to provide this study with insight into what they learnt at TCS and how they, individually, are using such experiences to navigate through both their social and professional lives. To complement this compiled oral archive, I furthermore provide an understanding of TCS through the existing records. By combining both the interviews and document analysis methods, I was able to get a practical sense of the social and cultural environment of Soweto in which TCS operated.

3.1.Sampling

As this study is premised on the understanding that TCS had a significant role in, amongst other things, the career paths of its participants, I define the wider population of about twenty people for this study as TCS participants who were actively involved in the early 1990s and are currently earning an income through self-employment, or more formal employment. A significant portion of this population is working in the creative industries and others are employed elsewhere. To narrow the population down to a manageable sample, I used a purposive sampling, which allowed for the identification of intrinsically interesting cases (O'Leary, 2005). In this way I was able to reduce the selection down to five. While four of the five main participants of this study see themselves as professional performing artists within the creative industries, one is employed full-time in the private corporate sector. Of the four performing artists, Tshepiso Ntsoko[3] is a part-time professional artist and full-time employee in the corporate sector. Although according to one 'taxonomy of artistic careers' (McCarthy et al., 2001: 39), Ntsoko would be considered a part-time professional artist because she earns a full-time salary through non-artistic work, I argue that she does earn from

[3] Maiden/ birth name: Tshepiso Windy Maledu.

her artistic work, devotes a significant amount of time towards her art-making, and is academically qualified as an artist.

I have limited the sample of this study to five for manageability in terms of available resources and time constraints. Although I recognise that this is a proportionately small sample, it is counterbalanced by the relatively in-depth investigation of the story of each participant and the 'lessons [to be] learned' from their experiences may be reasonably applicable to the wider TCS population (Davies & Mosdell, 2006; O'Leary, 2005). Also, by going into some depth of analysis of individual stories that paint a picture of a specific community arts project, I am contributing to the wider picture of trends in the South African community arts movement which could be useful to other researchers who may be working on a similar subject. Indeed, an underlying objective of this study is to convert people's experiences into a tangible archive that can survive into posterity.

3.2.In-depth Semi-structured Interviews with Main Participants

In collecting data from the participants of this study, I opted to conduct in-depth semi-structured interviews. I developed a standard set of predominately open-ended questions (Appendix 1), which I posed to the main participants of this study. However, the flexible nature of the semi-structured format as one component of my research method enabled me to explore interesting tangents that developed, and to probe spontaneously for more information in instances where the interviewees misunderstood certain questions (O' Leary, 2005). But since my approach was thematic, I was able to gather and compare similar information from each interviewee (Davies & Mosdell, 2006).

I conducted all but one of the interviews face-to-face with the participants of this study, which was my preferred mode of encounter. However, as a second strategy, I also made provision to conduct them telephonically or make use of a VOIP ("Voice Over Internet Protocol") service known as Skype in case a face-to-face interview was not possible. In the case of Tlalane Jeanette Moletsane, it was impossible to conduct an interview using either of these preferred forms within the timeframe of this study. Consequently I had to settle for a written email response to the set of questions (Appendix 2), which I received three months after she had acknowledged receipt thereof. Unlike the face-to-face method, emailing of

questions does not allow for reading of 'non-verbal cues' and better control of the interview (O' Leary, 2005:164). Control here means a combination of prepared structure and spontaneous intervention, while this passive receipt of responses by email does not allow for an instant probing in the event of a question being misunderstood by a respondent. This limitation manifested itself in the case of Moletsane. For example, when responding to questions regarding the teaching methods of TCS, she answered instead in relation to the 'public schools' method[s] of teaching' and based her answers on her experience as a learner at Thesele High School (pers. comm., 2012). Attempts to probe this shift further by means of soliciting another written response did not succeed, as the respondent could not find time to participate further in the study. However, I found the input of this respondent uniquely useful to this study. Moletsane is the only participant who does not have a career as an artist in the creative industries. After her involvement at TCS in 1995, she joined the private corporate sector where she built her career through a mixture of work experience and furthering her higher education.

Interviews with the other four main participants of this study were in informal settings, with times and places that were mutually convenient. The interview with Innocent Mandla Xosa, for example, was conducted in the lounge of his house in Soweto where he was relaxed with his family one afternoon. The other three preferred to come to my office in Soweto even though two of them reside in the northern suburbs of Johannesburg. As anticipated, based on my past experience as an interviewer for oral history projects, I found the informal settings more conducive to reminiscence, which suited the aims of this research project, as it required the participants to recollect events from two decades ago. Through this kind of setting participants were rather encouraged than pressured to recall information.

To ascertain an informed and consented participation from the participants of this study, I drafted a consent information sheet detailing the ethical code related to their participation in the study of this nature, as required by the Ethics Committee of the University of the Witwatersrand. I further provided a similar oral explanation to all those who participated in the interview process. Upon receipt of this information, all the participants signed the consent form I had developed, and agreed to take part in this study.

3.3.Structured Interviews with employers

In order to acquire more information on the unique attributes of each participant of this study in terms of their working standards and ethics, I planned to conduct structured interviews with one of each of their supervisors in his/her current or former work place. As above, face-to-face encounters were to receive priority, with telephone and Skype being secondary options. I hoped in this way I would be able to explore the effects of TCS as a community arts project that did not only train aspiring artists but that also prepared youth for ensuing careers (Weitz, 1996: 48). Given that these respondents were not directly involved in the study and needed not give detailed personal opinions, I opted for structured interviews to encourage objectivity and restrict the length of the interview.

It transpired however that the timing of my research study did not fit the availability of most of these supervisors. It became an impossible task to secure interviews with all but one of the five, targeted supervisors. Thus I managed to have a face-to-face interview with Ms Vanessa Cooke, Kenneth Mncedisi Nkosi's former supervisor as the head of the Market Theatre Laboratory (hereafter referred to as the Market Lab) at the time Nkosi worked there as a fieldworker. Coincidentally, Cooke was also the head of the Market Lab during Nkosi's study period there. She was therefore able to give further insight into the character of Nkosi in his professional development stage. As the Market Lab was one of the institutions with which TCS frequently interacted, this interview furthermore provided useful data about the relationship between TCS and the Market Lab. As for all the other supervisors, I was constrained to rely on written email responses to the set of questions (Appendix 3). According to Moletsane her supervisor could not participate because she was on suspension and eventually 'dismissed' at the time of completing this study (pers. comm., 2012). In her words, at this stage, Moletsane was 'reporting directly to a GM [General Manager] and [she] wouldn't like to get him involved' (ibid.). Likewise, Xosa's supervisor pulled out of this study at the eleventh hour after several promises to respond to my questions. He did not furnish a reason whatsoever for pulling out.

The head of TCS, Sifiso Ziqubu, unfortunately died some years ago. Within the structured interview format, I was however able to make contact with one of the leaders of TCS, Jabu Dladla. To this respondent I directed questions aimed at collecting information on the

background of TCS, job opportunities and performance platforms provided in the context of TCS activities, the types of skills taught and teaching and learning methods used (Appendix 4). I structured questions for this respondent in such a way as to also obtain his impression of each participant of this study.

To get the consent of these participants, I followed the same ethical procedure as explained in the previous section. All these participants unreservedly agreed to participate, including Xosa's supervisor who pulled out at the end, probably owing to time constraints.

3.4.Document analysis

In this section I adopt several aspects of Zina O'Leary's research method, particularly the document analysis (2005: 10). O'Leary defines document analysis as collection, review, interrogation, and analysis of various texts as a primary source of research data (ibid.: 177). She points out that this method can be used as 'both a data collection method and mode of analysis' (ibid.) and that it is not limited to written text on paper but extends to 'photographs, works of art, and even television programmes', differentiated from other sources by the fact that they were not generated by the researcher (ibid.: 10). This method includes 'exploring written documents for content and themes' (ibid.).

Using the document analysis method, I consult a number of 'authoritative sources' (ibid.: 178), comprising five media articles and two film posters (Appendix 5 & 6) profiling the works of Maphalala, Nkosi, Ntsoko and Xosa. Concerning TCS itself I look beyond the published realm, engaging with the following 'historical documents' (ibid.): undated report, business plan and ten photographs about both TCS and some of the main participants. For further information about TCS, I also consult the Market Lab's 1993 community theatre festival programme, which contains TCS's first fully-fledged theatre exposure. The document titled 'Improvement report for June 1989 – June 1990' written by the co-founder of the Market Theatre Laboratory, Barney Simon, is one document with which I engage to provide some background of the Market Lab within the context of its role to provide developmental support to community theatre projects such as TCS, and in effect the indirect impact the Market Lab had on the career paths of the main participants.

I apply different modes of analysis when engaging with various types of texts in order to add to data collection and arrive at certain conclusions supported by evidence from more than one source. In dealing with images, for instance, I observe the extent to which Nkosi's image is used in a prominent film poster. In this way I am able to look further into the levels of exposure that Nkosi enjoys in the film sector. Seeing Nkosi's image as a leading cast member on a poster of a famous film furthermore makes it easier to understand the magnitude of his success as a professional artist within the creative industries than when he simply says it in an interview (Weber, 2008). As for observing photographs taken at a particular times featuring TCS participants in either rehearsal or public performance, I am able to draw an inference as to how many participants TCS had, on average, at a particular period. Emmison (2004: 248) notes that the interpretation of such photographs also helps to 'generate extensive verbal commentary which might not be otherwise forthcoming during the interview process'. I however approach these images with the considerations raised by O'Leary (2005), Weber (2008) and Emmison (2004), that they may have been taken to drive a certain agenda and thus do not necessarily guarantee factual data.

When dealing with written texts I read each sentence for a specific purpose. For example, the media articles about the work of the main participants support the professional profile-data collected during interviews, while taking into consideration the credibility of the author, and the purpose for which they were written. I read the business plan and progress report of TCS with the intention of exploring how it developed to perceive itself as a business entity. As Atkinson & Coffey (2004:67) point out, I anticipate that these documents will 'also refer to other documents' that may provide more data on TCS or the main participants, pointing to the importance of a wider context for understanding individual sources or documents, a network of sources that corroborate, enrich or complicate one another.

3.5.Data Analysis

For the aim of this study stated above, three themes emerge for exploration. The first is the role of TCS in broadening the career scope of the main participants, given the limited access that black aspirants had in the early 1990s to formal arts training which could prepare them for artistic careers. The second theme is the teaching and learning methodology employed by TCS to transfer relevant skills to its members. A final theme I explore is around the long-term

effects of participation in TCS throughout the professional life of its former participants, although I acknowledge that these effects are difficult to measure or isolate, let alone analyse. In order to explore these areas, I translate the raw data collected in the course of this study into meaningful findings, using the thematic analysis process (O'Leary, 2005). O'Leary asserts that 'whether themes are inductively generated or deductively verified, there is a need for rich engagement with documents, transcripts, and texts that make up a researcher's raw material' so as to allow for the comparison of gathered information (2005: 196). I extrapolated the findings and conclusions and their relevance to the aim of this research report using this process (ibid.: 200)

In order to extract as much information from the interviews as possible, I found it useful to document all interviews in this research project through audio recording as well as the writing of notes. The audio recorder enabled me to concentrate on listening and on collecting non-verbal signs during the interview itself, and served as a useful aid during the verbatim transcription later on. In writing notes I arranged responses thematically and also took cognisance of non-verbal signals. This further allowed for a thorough interaction with the collected texts in my quest for emerging themes.

Applying Michael Quinn Patton's (2002: 454) 'indigenous concepts', I was able to explore multiple meanings of words used by the participants of this study to connote certain concepts. Patton describes the 'indigenous concepts' method as a means to extract and understand certain words or phrases as used particularly by a group to commonly mean what may not traditionally be the meaning of such words or phrases. For example, the term Thesele had double implications. It was used habitually to refer to both TCS and Thesele High School. From my written notes I also drew on non-verbal cues such as 'tone, volume, pitch and pace of pitch' to further arrive at meaningful understandings of words in context (O'Leary, 2005). To explore 'meaning and concepts in each text' I used 'constant comparison' and furthermore 'compared [new] text to the previously analysed text to draw out both similarities and disparities' (ibid.: 197).

Since my approach to thematic analysis was 'inductive' in nature, from the data itself I was able to discover that TCS's act of instilling the attitude of self-reliance and contributing to the

development of self-reliant communities presented this study with another theme worth exploring (Patton, 1990; O'Leary, 2005).

3.6.Scope and Limitations

Economic benefit is claimed by several studies to be one of many benefits of participating in the community arts projects (Newman, et al. 2003: 313). My study prioritises the need to explore the extent to which community arts projects aid their participants to access economic opportunities. The scope of this study is limited to one community-based arts project (although I touch on several other projects). In order to examine this project, I focus only on its former participants. What these participants provide is their own perception of what participating in a community arts project did for them. Apart from the discussions with their former TCS leader and work supervisors, this study provides no other means to measure and verify the input of these respondents. Furthermore, the scope of this study does not make provision for comparing the recipients of community arts projects with those who did not participate, which is something that Newman et al. consider a 'challenge of evaluating the arts' more generally (ibid.: 312). These authors observe that such an evaluation is often impractical, partly because of the level of complexity, and partly because of the extreme dissonance that often exists between demands for numerical accuracy and artistic temperaments (ibid.).

Using Matarasso (1996b), Newman et al. warn against attempts to measure the findings of this research in the following manner:

> Over zealous pursuit of scientific objectivity and the internal validity of evaluation programmes are inappropriate and unhelpful approaches to the evaluation of social programmes and especially arts projects (2003: 312).

Although the findings from this relatively small sample might be applicable to the selected population of this study, the findings of this study cannot be generalised to make claims for other community arts projects.

One last point is that my exposure to the sector of community arts in general, and the TCS story in particular, increases the reflexivity of the study. I attribute my own professional development to my participation in TCS, which is, to some extent, similar to the experiences

of main participants. I joined TCS in 1995 to develop my acting talent, but by 2000, until my ultimate exit in 2006, my participation was that of both actor and manager. This insider position might be seen to reduce the objectivity of my study, because my report may at times be subject to my biases, based on my own experiences. In order to ensure that the research is not reflective of my personal experiences, I placed myself into the role of a learner, and participants of this study as experts of the subject (Mehra, 2002). Furthermore, to ensure findings of this study are independent of my experiences and viewpoint, I kept note and quantified the text with which I agree in relation to text with which I disagreed. In this way I was able to extract my views from my role as a researcher and locate them within the perspective of the participants.

4. CHAPTER FOUR – TCS WITHIN THE COMMUNITY ARTS MILIEU

As explained above, this study is an in-depth analysis of how TCS as a community arts project contributed to the career paths of five of its participants who were actively involved in the 1990s. In order to establish a basic premise for this research aim, it is useful to establish the concept and practice of community arts more broadly, to put this close reading into a broader context. I therefore discuss the general background, ideology and practice of the community arts in this section, beginning with a brief history of TCS. In the succeeding sections of this chapter I continue to make links to the history and other background information of TCS within the context of their significance in the community arts movement more widely.

4.1.Brief History of TCS

TCS was established sometime in February 1991 by a group of learners and a teacher, Mr Sifiso Ziqubu of the White City Jabavu[4]-based Thesele High School (Nkosi pers. comm., 2012; Dladla pers. comm., 2012). The TCS project was initiated at the learners' request as an informal extracurricular activity for interested pupils of Thesele High School but evolved over the years to become an officially registered Non-Profit Organisation (NPO). As an NPO, it attracted wider interest, and came to involve a number of young people from the neighbourhood (outside of the school community). By the end of 1996 TCS had at least twenty regular participants – of which I was one – from several neighbouring townships, including White City Jabavu, Central Western Jabavu, Rockville, Jabulani, Molapo and Mofolo. Occasionally, it also attracted youth from farther townships such as Zola, Zondi, Diepkloof and Orange Farm. Most participants coming from afar relied on public transportation to get to and from TCS. Something that I observed during my time at TCS is that, given that these participants came from impoverished backgrounds, they could not always afford the relatively high transport fares and thus their participation at TCS was unsustainable. Participants of TCS were either still at school or unemployed and unable to further their education (Dladla pers. comm., 2011).

[4] A township in the South Western Townships (SOWETO).

Like most theatre projects that were founded at the beginning of the political transitional period in South Africa, TCS's theatre work was not influenced by the eighties' themes such as 'protest theatre' and 'theatre for resistance' (Solberg, 1999; Coplan, 2008). One of its founding principles was the notion that the arts improve learning ability (Weitz, 1996; Feske, 1999), and it sought to develop skills for self-determination and income generation (Debnam, 2005). Jabu Dladla, one of the playwrights and leaders of TCS, emphasizes that it was not only about producing good artistes but also responsible, confident and self-reliant adults (Dladla pers. comm., 2011).

Although TCS was fully sponsored to participate in the Grahamstown Arts Festival of 1993, it received its first funding in 1999 from the Gauteng Department of Health (GDH). As discussed elsewhere in this report, TCS encouraged its participants to take up responsibilities other than art-related ones. Consequently, as a participant who had joined TCS in the late 1995, I was given the opportunity to develop a funding proposal to the GDH, which resulted in the funding being awarded. At the time I was a part-time student of Technikon South Africa,[5] studying towards a National Diploma in Marketing. So, in addition to the other ways in which I benefitted from participation in TCS, I also benefited in terms of gaining practical experience in an administrative capacity. Between 1999 and 2004, I continued to be involved in managing the project for which this funding was allocated. I was also responsible for writing quarterly progress reports to the GDH. In this way my early interest and skill in cultural management was developed in the community arts project.

Between 2002 and 2010, TCS collaborated with a number of European-based cultural companies such as Les Piétons, Wurre Wurre, Archidée and Fransbrood (among others) to create internationally touring artistic productions. While TCS was working internationally, it was also producing commissioned performances locally, for NGOs such as Age-in-Action and private companies such as Chubb Safes. In this way TCS managed to further generate income and create job opportunities for its participants. While touring in Europe in 2003, TCS attracted the attention of a Dutch artist, Herman Van Veen, who through his foundation intended to raise funds to build a theatre for TCS which was to be named the Miracle Theatre. As TCS could not find land on which to embark on this project, it partnered with a

[5] Now University of South Africa (UNISA).

local community centre, called Ipelegeng Community Centre (ICC) to renovate one of its halls with a view to transform it into this theatre. At the same time TCS was undergoing a change of leadership – something which led to a decision to deploy its own participants to mainly artistic duties – while ICC performed its administrative duties. This arrangement resulted in the deregistration of TCS as an entity, which simply became a theatre project of ICC (Miracle Theatre, 2005). However the Miracle Theatre project never materialised,[6] whilst TCS ceased to exist in 2010.

For the purposes of this study, I focus on the TCS period of 1991 to 1995. This period signifies South Africa's transition from the Apartheid regime to democracy.[7] Thus the main participants of this study provide an interesting case since their participation in the community arts project straddles the end of the Apartheid period and the dawn of democracy. Moreover, while Apartheid laws systematically limited their career horizons, these were suddenly widened by post-1994 politics. However, at the same time, these participants were faced with new challenges of survival in a more globalised economic system that South Africa was entering.

4.2.Understanding Community Arts

Despite varying perceptions of community arts in different epochs, and geographic and demographic spheres, community participation remains at the core of the concept of community arts. A relationship that an arts project has with a community in which it operates thus gives character to this concept. This relationship ranges from the role an arts project plays in the community to the extent to which the community participates. In his paper titled 'In Search of the Essence', Eugene Van Erven [n/d: 1] evokes a definition of community arts employed by the Dutch Community Art Lab and Cultuurnetwerk Nederland as

[6] The Herman Van Veen Foundation subsequently funded the construction of a theatre project in Elandshoorn, Limpopo, South Africa, named The Miracle 1.

[7] Between 1960 and 1990, the South African Apartheid Government intensified the oppressive laws by banning all the black opposing political organisations, among other strategies. However, it unbanned them in 1990 and began formal negotiations known as Conversion for Democratic South Africa (CODESA) in 1991, which led to the historic democratic national elections in 1994. In 1996 South Africa received its milestone constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996) under the new democratic regime.

> a means of creating art in which professional artists work more or less intensively with people who do not normally come into contact with art and culture.

There is relevance in the meaning suggested in this definition for the South African context. Before 1994 in South Africa, black communities were systematically deprived access to arts and culture until the intervention of community arts projects. Since the founding of Polly Street Arts Centre, South Africa's first community arts centre, by the Johannesburg Local Committee for Non-European Adult Education in 1949, a number of community arts projects came along and in the process exposed the practice of arts and culture to blacks (Miles, 2004:17). To provide further relevance, Lochner refers us to the way in which Hagg (1989: n.p.) has defined community arts in South Africa:

> Community Arts provides an outlet for self-expression, an opportunity to develop an alternative culture and to create new symbols as well as to provide educational and economic networks. Centres allow people to participate at grass-root level, with an emphasis on workshop process rather than end-products. Ordinary people can become participants in efforts to redefine culture (2011: 5).

The public opinion about community arts is generally influenced by the role it plays in the community. Historically in the Anglo-Saxon world, the field of community arts has been perceived as concerned with 'social reform and radical arts' (Van Erven, n/d: 4). Different epochs have influenced different perceptions of community arts in South Africa. Whereas the post-1994 South African government also viewed community arts as a tool for social reform, during Apartheid most commentators located it in 'the broader political struggle for democracy' (Van Robbroeck 1991: 2; White Paper, 1996, Hagg, 2010). Opinions and perceptions as informed by the role of community arts are useful to appreciate the unique application of ideologies and practices of community arts in different epochs and geographic areas. In the next sections and chapters, I will discuss these ideologies and practices further.

4.3.TCS as a community arts project

In 1991, TCS emerged as part of a movement that was initiated, in South Africa, forty-two years prior to its existence. The community arts movement in South Africa finds its roots and evolution in the 'missionaries and government departments [whose intentions were to…] generate employment, provide recreational facilities and… foster and revive creative

traditions within black communities' (Van Robbroeck, 2004: 42). Community arts centres were recognised as the catalysts of this movement, with the Polly Street Arts Centre and Rorke's Drift Arts and Craft Centre being the two pioneers (ibid.). Van Robbroeck (2004) identifies this 'top down' trajectory of South African community arts movement as a characteristic that distinguishes it from its counterparts elsewhere in the world. In South America, Asia, Australia, Europe and other parts of Africa in the 1960s and 1970s, the community arts movement was founded as a result of politically conscious artists challenging political power and social order from the bottom up (Van Robbroeck, 2004; Van Erven, 2001; Marschall, 2002), whereas in South Africa it resulted from authorities' desire to fulfil social responsibilities.

Upon gaining momentum, however in the 1970s and 80s, a section of the South African community arts movement – especially as seen through the perspective of independent centres such as the Federated Union of Black Artists (FUBA) Academy and the Community Arts Projects (CAP) – resonated with the ideology and practices of its counterpart abroad as it also became an instrument to mobilise marginalised communities against the socio-political status quo (Van Robbroeck, 2004; Davis, 2004; Sewpaul, 2004, Lochner, 2011).

The South African literature widely attributes the turn that the community arts movement took in the 1970s and 80s to the Black Consciousness Movement (BCM) and African National Congress (ANC). Through the Black People's Convention and several writings such as 'Black Consciousness and Culture', BCM did not only politicise the South African community arts movement but also recognised it as an instrument of educating the marginalised communities in the 1970s (Sewpaul, 2004; Van Robbroeck, 2004). During the turbulent 1980s, the ANC in exile organised three notable cultural conferences, being the Culture and Resistance Symposium in Gaborone, Botswana, in 1982, Culture in Another South Africa (CASA) in Amsterdam, Netherlands, in 1987, and the 1990 Culture and Empowerment Conference held as part of the Zabalaza Festival in London, England. Together with the United Democratic Front (UDF) – formed in 1983 – these conferences drew attention to the exploitation of culture as a mechanism to thwart the 'dominant apartheid culture' and 'emphasised the importance of collective decision making as a tool for mobilising communities' (ibid.: 36, 46).

Arguably, another turn took place in the 1990s, a time in which the South African community arts movement, especially the theatre sector, carried less of liberation political undertones and became more social transformation oriented. Consciously or subconsciously, it became more generally aligned to the aims of the now defunct Rorke's Drift and, Polly Street centres, and those of the Apartheid government-administered centres such as the Katlehong Arts Centre and the Mofolo Arts Centre, which were to provide arts education, provide income generating opportunities and 'combat youth delinquency' (Van Robbroeck, 1991: 58). Its practices were also in parity with those in other parts of the world. Findings of studies done by Weitz (1996), Matarasso (1997: 14), Fiske (1999) and Van Erven (2001), Gasman & Anderson-Thompkins (2003: 431) deduce theories, amongst others, that community arts projects 'build social competence', improve learning ability, builds skills and 'contribute to people's employability'.

Like many community theatre projects burgeoning in the 1990s in black townships such as Soweto, TCS was not influenced by political themes of the turbulent 1980s. It was, on the other hand, influenced by the aforementioned evolving practices of the 1990s, which were socio-economic-transformation-led (Solberg, 1999; Coplan, 2008). TCS, Soweto Dance Theatre (SDT), Sibikwa, Moving into Dance Mophatong and many other community-based arts organisations of the time operated within these theoretical frameworks as deduced through the findings of Weitz (1996), Matarasso (1997), Fiske (1999), Van Erven (2001) and Gasman & Anderson-Thompkins (2003). Most significantly for my purposes, they also trained and produced practitioners who have careers in the creative industries.

4.4.Founding ideology

Lochner recognises the teachings of Black Consciousness in the community arts centres[8] in the post-Soweto uprising era:

> These centres were mostly in the township areas and expressed the Black Consciousness ideals of creating structures for self-governance and independence. Artists who had been

[8] Community Arts Centres are commonly known for their role as catalysts for community arts projects and thus are accepted within the category of community arts projects (Stark & Gaylard, 2009).

> trained could pass on their skills to the next generation and actively begin to counter the circumstances imposed by apartheid (2011: 9).

There seems to be a trail of evidence discernible in various studies, even as recent as that of Lochner (2011), confirming that the ideology of community arts projects of the post-Soweto uprising era was reflective of the spirit of self-determination and self-realisation. This evidence resonates with the argument of this report that community arts projects such as TCS were the epitome of Nyerere's ideology of African Socialism, which is explained in more depth further on. I acknowledge the wide claims that Black Consciousness teachings did not only uphold this ideology but ensured that it infiltrated into some of the community arts projects. I will, for the purpose of this section, discuss TCS as a community arts project that reflected this ideology not only within the confines of the project but in a much more far-reaching manner, within the lives of the participants of this study.

As mentioned above, Bantu Education was a restrictive system that reinforced Apartheid (Kros, 2010). It was one of the most blatant intentions of Apartheid to restrict blacks from being in the same league with their white counterparts, and as an education system it was to provide an institution of incongruity for blacks in South Africa that would put this intention into practice (ibid.). Thesele High School, where TCS was founded, was very much a product of this restrictive education system. Arts subjects were never offered there, and, in the early 1990s, they were only offered by two other schools in Soweto (Joffe & Newton, 2008). By not offering arts subjects more widely, Bantu Education restricted career prospects of the black populace in the creative industries. However, given the eminence of community arts movement in South Africa (dating back to the Polly Street and Rorke's Drift centres), and later influenced to a large degree by the presence of the Black Consciousness teachings (Van Robbroeck, 2004; Davis, 2004; Lochner, 2011), the learners of TCS were cognizant of arts being an alternative to the prescribed syllabus and talent-based extra-mural activities such as football and netball.

Despite the absence of basic resources such as a hall or teachers who were qualified to teach theatre, TCS was formed as the school's theatre project. It was initiated when Kenneth Mncedisi Nkosi – who had prior practical exposure to community arts projects elsewhere – led a delegation of learners to approach a teacher, Sifiso Ziqubu, to ask him to head their

small school group of theatre (Cooke pers. comm., 2012; Nkosi pers. comm., 2012). Nkosi identified him as a suitable candidate to head their group after Ziqubu used performance as a teaching technique in a Zulu literature class in which Nkosi took part. Ziqubu would make his Zulu literature learners to act the plays that were contained in a Zulu literature book, *Ishashalazi*. Nkosi and his classmates approached Ziqubu towards the last part of 1990, and in February at the start of the following school year, TCS was conceived informally as an official school project named Thesele Cultural Creative Society (TCCS), later renamed Thesele Creative Society (TCS). The young Nkosi's exposure to community arts projects in the late 1980s was surely significant in convincing him that the lack of basic resources could not prevent them from initiating an alternative learning area and extra-mural activity. The fact that Nkosi led a delegation of learners to spark this initiative, shows the spirit of self-determination which Lochner (2011) associates with community arts projects of the post-Soweto uprising epoch, while the sheer disregard of own limitations resonates with Nyerere's (1968) ideal of African Socialism.

As a founding member, Nkosi envisioned TCS in terms of the principles of self-determination and self-reliance. TCS, on behalf of Thesele High School, introduced theatre skills to learners for the first time. Thus this initiative defied the restrictions of Bantu Education, while it proved the practicality of self-determination in terms of educational path. Ironically the Apartheid ideology, in its own humanly peculiar way, was established on the basis of 'separate development', meaning each racial group should self-determine its development (Worden, 2011). This founding principle of Apartheid was defied and rejected by most members of the politically conscious black community. However, the parallels that can be drawn from these conflicting ideologies could have made the likes of Eiselen, about whom it was 'claimed [he] defended separate development innocently', to feel exonerated (Kros, 2010; 114). It is needless to say, however, that Apartheid and colonialism-orientated ideals of separate development contrasted with the BCM and Nyerere's ideologies of self-determination and self-reliance by its own pursuit of white supremacy, while BCM and Nyerere's ideology were neither in pursuit of white nor black supremacy. It is not the purpose of this report, however, to discuss the similarities and dissimilarities of the Apartheid ideology, and the black consciousness and African socialism ideologies. I have made reference to these ideologies merely as an attempt to allay any misconceptions that may arise

in engaging with this study, that initiatives of self-determination and self-reliance were reinforced by Apartheid. Also the fact that this report, like many other studies of this nature, reflects on Apartheid should not be construed to imply that the field of community arts could not have forged its own path had it not been for Apartheid. Indeed, paths continue to be forged by such projects in the differently challenging post-Apartheid era.

Nyerere argues that a third-world state such as Tanzania should '...not adopt an attitude that nothing can be done until someone else agrees to give us money', instead it should be self-reliant (1968: 100). He suggests that the logical starting point for self-reliance projects is at community level because that is where the African Socialism, explained above, is broadly implemented, anyway (ibid.: 55). TCS was set up even when there was no funding promised to it and it continued to survive for a long time even when international funding had dried up in the NGO sector. Although in 2005 TCS was involved in a project to build a theatre infrastructure in which it could operate, it conducted its activities primarily in a classroom, and later in a hall of community centre infrastructure called Ipelegeng Community Centre until its final collapse in 2010 (Miracle Theatre, 2005).

5. CHAPTER FIVE – EXPLORING THE INTERVIEWS

As mentioned earlier on in this research report, in this study I intend to establish how TCS played a role in broadening the scope of career paths for the main participants of this study in the early 1990s. This included looking at the types of skills provided by TCS within the community theatre environment and the ways in which such skills were transferred, and exploring how the main participants are currently experiencing the effects of participation in TCS as a community arts project. Accordingly, for my interviews with the participants of this study, I formulated questions with the purpose of extracting reliable information that can answer the broader questions of this research as contained in the aforementioned aim. In the following sections of this chapter, I interpret the answers provided during interviews by the respondents.

As the research methodology of this study allowed for further deduction of themes from the main participants of this study, I draw out a number of additional themes. As permitted within the confines of the scope of this study, however, I explore one of these in detail for its salient relevance in relation to other interview-deduced themes. Given that the primary focus of this study is centred on professional development, I look further into the theme that considers the question of the kind of careerists that these participants have since become. I have however included an exploration of other themes that emerged from the interviews, although they might not seem to be of central importance to furthering the overall argument of this project, because they raise questions that are nonetheless of interest and could be answered by other researchers of community arts. This section therefore goes beyond extracting elements from the interviews purely to answer my primary research question, which also has the effect of providing these responses with a wider context.[9]

5.1.Introducing the main participants

This study looks at the career paths of five people to whom I refer as the main participants. These are individuals who were actively involved with TCS between 1991 and 1995. During their involvement, they all considered themselves to be members of TCS. Their involvement

[9] In this chapter I include verbatim transcriptions of only the interview extracts that are relevant to this report. Audio files are available on request.

at TCS was commonly in and around learning new theatre and life skills and doing odd jobs and this study is premised on the understanding that their active involvement at TCS influenced their career paths. This understanding has been framed by theories developed by community arts researchers such as Weitz (1996), Mattaraso (1997) and Fiske (1999) that active involvement in community arts projects, amongst other things, prepares participants for ensuing jobs.

The group of five main participants consists of three females, namely Miriam Vangile Maphalala, Tshepiso Ntsoko and Tlalane Jeanette Moletsane, and two males, Kenneth Mncedisi Nkosi, and Innocent Mandla Xosa. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, these main participants have each offered this study an intrinsically interesting case. In the next paragraphs I draw attention to each of their TCS and work-related profiles.

5.1.1. Ms Miriam Vangile ("Sisi") Maphalala

Maphalala is currently a fulltime actor who lives in White City Jabavu, Soweto at the home where she was born and brought up. She was enrolled as a grade eight learner at Thesele High School in 1992. Upon hearing about a group of fellow learners who converged informally after official schooling hours in one of the classrooms of the school to conduct theatre activities, she went to find out if this was something she could also participate in. She 'saw people dancing' and immediately decided that it was something she wanted to be part of (pers. comm., 2012). Just like that, she became a member of TCS and remained an active member for more than twelve years. She says she took a decision to join TCS because its activities occupied the vacuum of afterschool recreational activities, something which would have subjected her to partaking in 'street gossips' (ibid.).

It was her involvement in TCS that exposed Maphalala for the very first time to theatre. At TCS, she discovered both her acting and singing talents. TCS proceeded to provide her with theatre skills and experience. She used these skills to establish herself as a fulltime professional career actor. She worked in a number of theatre projects such as the production of the play, *The Rise of the Nation*. In this project she worked mostly as a lead singer and was also given the role of an assistant music director. The synopsis of *The Rise of the Nation* credits her as the play's music composer.

Since 2010 she has been employed as an actor and peer educator by an educational theatre company called Themba Interactive. Maphalala therefore represents an interesting case of someone who found her way into a career in the creative industries during and immediately following participation in a community arts project. She has therefore never acquired formal training for her profession from anywhere. She does, however, at times consider obtaining a formal qualification, merely as a response to fears that she would lose her job if she continues working without some form of a certificate, as she believes that her employers prefer working with formal tertiary-level graduates.

5.1.2. Mrs Tshepiso Ntsoko

In her days at TCS she was known as Windy Tshepiso Maledu. She prefers to be referred to only as Tshepiso Ntsoko these days; this is how she introduced herself to me during our interview, 'I am Tshepiso Ntsoko… previously known as Tshepiso Maledu… clearly life has happened' (pers. comm., 2012). Ntsoko is a surname adopted upon marriage. She is one of the Thesele school learners for whom TCS showcased its first play, *uMhlupheki*, in 1991. Watching fellow learners perform made her to immediately join TCS because, in her words:

> I've always loved acting, I think ... Even in my primary school I did those mini-acting stories. I've grown up being that girl who'd stand in the mirror and talk to herself (Ntsoko pers. comm., 2012).

TCS provided her with a serious opportunity to explore her acting talents. It is through participation in TCS that she learnt about the disciplines of acting and gained the confidence necessary for her to navigate through her life as a teenager and later career. Like Maphalala, she was born and raised in White City Jabavu, a township which anecdotal evidence suggests is one of the most impoverished and crime-infested in Soweto. She currently resides in Randburg, a northern suburb in Joburg. To her, being actively involved at TCS helped steer her away from teenage-related pressures such as unwanted pregnancy.

After participating at TCS in 1996 she joined SA Eagle, an insurance company for which she worked for five years before realising that she had a passion for the performing arts and craved taking up dramatic arts studies. The University of the Witwatersrand enrolled and subsequently qualified her with an Honours degree in dramatic arts. Her other academic

credentials include qualifications in Human Resources Management (University of South Africa), and Higher Education in Training Development and Programme in Industrial and Organizational Psychology (University of Johannesburg). She currently works part-time as a professional artiste and as a motivational speaker, and fulltime as a leadership coach for Discovery, a health, life and financial insurance company. She is also an author of the chapter titled, 'Believe You Can' in the book, titled *Voices of Inspiration* (Seleka et al., 2004). She finds that that her acting skills are adaptable to all her current career options.

5.1.3. Ms Tlalane Jeannette Moletsane

Like Ntsoko, Moletsane resides in a northern suburb of Johannesburg today, but was born and grew up in White City Jabavu. She also attained her high school education from Thesele High School. She joined TCS in 1994 as a response to a lack of interest-inducing recreational activities both in her school and the township. Jabulani Dladla, the script-writer and co-leader of TCS, remembers Moletsane as

> one of the dedicated members [pause] gifted in singing, gifted in dancing, gifted in all aspects of performing arts but then I suppose her being influenced by [her] parents, she diverted from performing arts [and] pursued a career in MTN[10] (Dladla pers. comm., 2012).

Moletsane started her professional journey when she joined PG Glass to work as a cash controller. Before her recent appointment as a compliance officer at MTN, she undertook the responsibility to manage 22 staffers. She claims to have developed her ability to 'deal with people' while at TCS, where she was also given a responsibility of being a 'personal assistant' (Moletsane pers. comm., 2012). Over and above her busy professional schedule, she is studying towards a degree in the field of forensic psychology at the University of the Witwatersrand.

5.1.4. Mr Mandla Innocent "S'dala" Xosa

Like all the aforementioned main participants, Xosa resided within half a kilometre radius from TCS. He was not a learner at Thesele High School, but had defected from the newly formed drama group in his own high school, Morris Isaacson, in 1992. He felt however that

[10] Mobile Telephone Network, a South African-based multinational mobile telecommunications provider.

he still needed guidance, and, thanks to a once-off collaborative project between his school and Thesele, he became aware of TCS and thus identified it as an ideal institution that could guide him. This action generated controversy as teachers in his school felt his talents could have been much better used to help build a drama group in his own school, but he found TCS to be an environment that was more conducive to learning because of the experience the group carried:

> Rehearsing with Morris, then I realised that, with the Morris guys, they are all new in this [but] with Thesele at least they've already started it, a year or sometime ago before us. So for me, if I want to grow into this and develop, and see where it is gonna take me, it's better to be with the people who are already there (Xosa pers. comm., 2012).

In his first year at TCS, he won an award as the ensemble's best actor, which convinced him that he was talented and motivated him to seriously consider pursuing a career as an actor. At TCS he was further introduced to drumming skills. He feels that everything he learnt at TCS has been useful to his career. He often works as a lead drummer for drum café, a corporate drumming and theatre company. He freelances as an actor and gets regular employment in industrial theatre projects and in *Laugh out Loud*, a prank TV show which is co-produced by Kenneth Mncedisi Nkosi, one of the other main participants. Xosa considers himself successful in his career even though he never gained any formal training. He owns a house in Protea South, Soweto where he lives with his wife and children.

5.1.5. Kenneth Mncedisi Nkosi

Nkosi is arguably the most recognisable stage and film actor in South Africa today. This status was established through his role in the film *Tsotsi* (2005) and reinforced by his recent lead role in the Leon Schuster film, *Mad Buddies* (2012). If rated using the criteria of Hollywood, he is definitely an A-list actor of this country. He worked hard on his business model to be where he is today:

> You got to work on your craft. You've got to have something to offer – perfect that – be a god at that. … I needed to have something that [when] anybody … say[s] Kenneth Nkosi – "this is what Kenneth Nkosi can do". I don't believe in this thing that actors are replaceable, there's nothing like that. You replace the cast, you can't replace me and what I can bring. So I needed to create a Kenneth Nkosi brand that when you wanted Kenneth Nkosi you knew what

> [I was going to] give you ... So [pause] people started to get attracted to me, to get to know me. Now they know me. Now they want me. Now I'm in demand. Now, how do I do it? How do I spin this thing around? How do I make these people aware that this is business as well? [In] 2004, the only thing I did was *Tsotsi* [and] nothing else purely because I started rejecting work, when people came to me with an offer, I said "no guys I think I'm worth more than that" …
>
> Luckily, now for the past five years, at least, I don't have to rely on people calling me [pause] I create my own work (Nkosi pers. comm., 2012).

Indeed Nkosi works as a film producer, a skill for which he has never received training. He simply adapted his positive attitude towards learning – the attitude he first developed while at TCS – in order to succeed in his latest profession. Vanessa Cooke who once provided him with supervision at the Market Lab in his days as both fieldworker and student stresses this attitude when she describes him:

> Kenneth, right from the beginning of his time at the Lab, [pause] was very open, very open to learning, very open to trusting people … he was a very good influence in the class … he never was taught movies at the Lab but he learnt it anyway … I think he was able to take what he learnt from theatre and put it into movies because he never studied it as such but he wants to learn – something I wish a lot of other people could … be like him. I don't think he's scared … if you wanna do something, just do it (Nkosi pers. comm., 2012).

The journey into his career path began in his quest for an alternative activity to sport such as football, which was rather popular in Soweto. He participated in one youth-oriented structure after another. One of those was National Institution for Crime Prevention and Reintegration of Offenders (Nicro), where he was introduced to theatre lessons by professional actors. But it was with TCS, a project that he co-initiated as a learner of Thesele High School in 1991, that he became convinced that he stood a chance as a careerist in the performing arts. The telling moment came when he performed before the entire school in the leading role of Mhlupheki in TCS's first play, *uMhlupheki*. His participation at TCS reduced his shyness, built his confidence and increased his popularity in school.

He is now a married father who currently resides in a Joburg suburb, which is a far cry from Rockville, a Soweto township where his old family house is situated. Rockville is the next township from White City Jabavu where the other main participants resided at the time of

their active involvement at TCS, and where TCS conducted its activities in a classroom of Thesele High School.

In examining the professional and socio-economic profiles of the main participants, I conclude that TCS was a significant contributing factor towards the development of these participants, both personal and professional. All the five main participants are employable based, to a large extent, on skills they developed while at TCS. They prove to lead a balanced social life as demonstrated by the fact that they all, bar Maphalala, live in their own houses. Their sense of social responsibility developed while they were at TCS. Their participation at TCS guided them away from social ills of their times such as crime and teenage pregnancy, and it developed their confidence and their social sense of belonging.

5.2. An alternative to 'soccer and nothing else'

The main participants of this study have all acknowledged the recreational role that TCS has played in their community. In these interviews they draw attention to the fact that in White City and Rockville there was a severe lack of recreational facilities and programmes. The only tangible form of useable recreational facilities included underdeveloped halls and football facilities. Unlike halls where there were no formal programmes, football clubs provided football programmes in their facilities. It seemed for Jabulani Dladla, who joined and ultimately became one of the leaders of TCS in 1992, that football was systematically shoved down the throats of the youth in his area, and most distinctively he observes that owing to this none of its participants had been exposed to professional theatre productions:

> They only got to see what theatre was all about by going and watching plays showcasing at the Market Theatre Laboratory, people then became interested. It is then that they saw what made people who appear on television what they are…it gave them an alternative because what was popular then, it was just soccer and nothing else (Dladla pers. comm., 2012).

The story of one of the main participants of this study, Nkosi, who relinquished his studies before passing grade twelve, reminds us of the regrettable reality of Bantu Education which limited the career scope of black learners. Nkosi quit school because he was not interested in remaining within the constrictive school environment but wanted to study something which was close to his heart and would later earn him a living: performing arts. In this sense even

the school system did not offer the main participants an alternative career for which they had real passion. From the answers provided by the main participants of this study, I extrapolated that on the other hand TCS did in fact offer an alternative career.

According to the TCS Business plan of 2005, '[TCS's] aims [were] to manage a financially stable, accountable entity [providing] the opportunity for the employment and personal growth of [their] ensemble' (Miracle Theatre, 2005). Although this statement is recent, it gives a sense of the way in which TCS grew to perceive itself, perhaps taking its cue from the career paths of the main participants. Also this statement lacks explicitness that TCS had career orientation as one of its objectives, yet none of the main participants had envisioned a career in the arts prior to their participation in TCS. Four of them expressed the strong conviction that TCS guided their career path. Nkosi, for instance, says:

> I wanted to do everything. To me at the time, [it] was about doing everything – just engage yourself in everything – from debating team, to musical group, to dance troupe. You just wanted to be engaged and involved as a young person. To me that's what it was, initially. It was not even about knowing if I could make it or not but I know one day…one day that I knew that there was something that I had that could work for me was my very first theatre performance in front of the whole school at Thesele…the whole school was there watching our very first theatre performance, Mhlupheki…that is the performance that I know...that's when I decided…this is what I wanted to do, because... I will tell you that a year later – that's when I decided [that] I'm not interested in just accounting and biblical studies, history and all that…this is what I want to do (Nkosi pers. comm., 2012).

Nkosi therefore concludes that TCS

> propelled my career to a large degree because after that, which is something I don't like to encourage from kids, I quit school and purely because I wanted to go and study something that I liked and enjoyed, and it was arts, performing arts (Nkosi pers. comm., 2012).

Tshepiso Ntsoko knew that she wanted to help people. Accordingly her childhood career ambition was to become a doctor. However her exposure to the theatre through TCS widened her career options:

> The only exposure I had about helping people was to be a doctor. I thought I need[ed] to be a doctor until I did my first aid course. I [then] realised… I'm so scared of blood, there's no

> way in heaven that I'll be a doctor. And… I looked at my strengths and said where are my passions and stuff like that, and then I think the arts and therapy… I have always been inclined in counselling and helping people that way, so really it was merging the two worlds of being a drama therapist …
>
> [TCS] was the first official space where one got to know about what is … theatre and acting … (Ntsoko pers. comm., 2012).

It is this exposure that informed her career option – this 'merging of two worlds' – as drama therapist.

Miriam Maphalala was intrigued by the dancing and singing of her peers but did not think that these arts forms could be a career for her until more than eight years after joining TCS. When describing her interest in joining TCS she says:

> I just decided to go there just to avoid meaningless gossip in my neighbourhood and then I found people dancing, singing and all that. Then I was interested and I joined them but by then I was not aware [or sure] of myself…if I wanted to do this. I just went there just to do [as others]. But I realised in… I think in 97 – I was a bit older then – that's when I realised [this is] something that I love. That's when I realised that I can sing…and…act also. I think in 2000 and beyond…I started going outside to attend auditions and all that (Maphalala pers. comm., 2012).

Mandla Xosa is indebted to TCS for the fact that his hyper-activeness was properly channelled into a talent out of which he later earned a living. As I have alluded to above, his talent was discovered through a brief involvement in a drama project organised at his school, Morris Isaacson High School, which later collaborated with TCS in 'The Volkswagen Music Active', a performing arts educational project for high schools. It was this collaboration that attracted him to TCS and subsequently began his career path:

> Maybe I did not realise it's a talent. Then they would say "*eish, lentwana iyaphapha*,"[11] so not realising that [this] thing may be a talent…behind that *kuphapha lokho kwakhona*.[12] So, I can say I always had a talent I just needed a right channel or a right path to showcase or to

[11] Translation in context (from Zulu): 'this boy is too hyperactive'.

[12] Translation in context (from Zulu): 'the so-called hyperactivity'.

> expose the talent that was in me. So, fortunately when that project came, my talent was discovered (Xosa pers. comm., 2012).

When responding to the question about what he has learnt while at TCS, he continued to attribute his career choice in the creative industries to TCS's teachings and methods thereof:

> Also from TCS I learned a lot, and while I was still learning a lot I was not even aware that I'm also contributing a lot. Because I remember not very long after I have joined – annually we always had awards ceremony - when I got there I was awarded the best actor of the group and I was still new by then. So you can imagine…that also gave me courage towards my career [ambitions]' (Xosa pers. comm., 2012).

The method applied by TCS to award participants for showing improvement in a certain discipline instilled self-belief in Xosa. He became convinced that he was suitable to pursue a successful career in the creative industries.

In her written submission, Tlalane Jeannette Moletsane reveals that she simply joined TCS because, in her words: 'I was bored and I did not have much to do, at the time I was still trying to find myself' (pers. comm., 2012). Considering that her childhood career dream was to become a lawyer, it is fairly clear that she did not join TCS in the hope of finding her way down a theatre-related career path. However, she used her TCS experience to pursue her own career path, albeit outside the arts. As the compliance officer for MTN, she attributes her innovativeness and leadership skills to TCS:

> Everyone was given an opportunity to do something at the time, we were given different roles to do, I was a personal assistant at the time, we had directors and so on, so we were working closely with these directors and I learned a lot from these leaders, they shared their innovative ideas with us (Moletsane pers. comm., 2012).

The data gathered through these interviews shows that TCS did not only provide a recreational option but it also provided career-guiding work experience. Dladla believes that most participants became interested in working professionally in the arts after TCS had begun to collaborate professionally with international theatre troupes 'to an extent that most of them [former TCS participants] are still involved with the arts' (pers. comm., 2012).

5.3. There was no curriculum

Unlike Nkosi, who was trained by the Market Lab after participation in TCS, Xosa and Maphalala – two of only three main participants of this study who work fulltime within the creative industries – have not had any formal training in the arts. As mentioned elsewhere in this report, Ntsoko too has a university degree in dramatic arts, although she works part-time as a theatre director. Given their survival pattern in this tough industry, Xosa and Maphalala thus provide this study with interesting cases. My next area of exploration is to determine what skills were transferred through TCS activities and how were they transferred. Therefore, in this section, I explore the teaching and learning methodology employed by TCS to transfer the relevant skills to its members.

In this section I establish that TCS did not follow any particular curriculum as in a school, and that the transfer of skills was largely improvised. The TCS pedagogical strategy entailed learning from visiting experienced artists such as the fieldworkers of the Market Lab, and attending theatre workshops, watching other shows, and learning by doing. In this section, I identify a certain number of skills that were transferred through TCS activities and can be categorised as either artistic or non-artistic. Artistic skills acquired at TCS are the most obvious ones, and include conventional theatre practices such as singing, acting and dance.

But non-artistic skills were also an important part of the learning experience. Among these, the participants of this study all identify social and, to an extent, economic survival skills. All the participants of this study felt they developed discipline and focus for self-determination and independence at TCS, and became equipped to deal with peer pressure. They find these teachings to be not only of critical importance in their everyday social lives but also in their careers – they needed these skills to survive their chosen professions. In this section, I will go on to explore the importance of these skills in the social lives of all the main participants from the perspective of their interviews. I will then, in the ensuing sections, discuss the importance of these skills in their careers.

5.3.1. Artistic skills and methodology

Experienced community-based artists involved in teaching at TCS were expected to teach what they knew – through their own experience – to the participants. As it was the case with the lesser known yet very experienced actor and playwright, the late Mr Zwelibanzi Maseko.

Xosa says he has never forgotten his teachings and finds them helpful to his career even today:

> He had a lot of experience already, by then, in terms of acting. So he would come there, share the experience, teach us…also one thing that I once learnt from him, where he described the word actor…he had his own way of giving workshops or teaching us. Like as an actor…he would tell you what is needed from you as an actor, come there give us notes, tell us "you must bring a pen and a paper, I don't want uneducated actors who think [they] can just jump onto a stage…I want to give you a lot of information, not only the acting information but I want you to know the background of acting." […] He played a huge role in our careers as actors.
>
> …
>
> I remember [pause] when he came one day and asked us "what is an actor? Define the word actor for me since you believe you are actors"…and we were like "an actor is a performer, an actor is…". He just wrote the [word,] actor on the [chalk] board. I still remember…he said 'A' – you must be active as an actor, then 'C' – you must be creative, then 'T' – you must have [excellent] timing on stage, you don't just utter your lines just like that, even with your movements on stage, you must have timing; then 'O' – you must be organised as an actor before the show, you must know where are your props, you must be in backstage two hours or an hour and a-half before the show…all those things that we did not know. Then something about 'R'…I don't [quite] remember what he said about 'R' (Xosa pers. comm., 2012).

An acclaimed professional stage and TV actor, Thulani Didi, who was part of the Mbongeni Ngema's *Sarafina* and at the time resided in Soweto, also had a background in the community arts world. Didi added to the rich list of experienced community-based artists who played a role in transferring skills within this milieu. Ntsoko recalls his teaching methods as typical and disciplinarian:

> The likes of Mbongeni Ngema used to *traap*.[13] In rehearsals there is a sjambok. When some of their actors came, discipline was not an issue…I remember Thulani, Thulani used to really *traap* us (Ntsoko pers. comm., 2012).

[13] Translated in context (from Afrikaans): 'to lash'

The skills transfer role of the founding leader, the late Sifiso Ziqubu, is recognised by the respondents, even though the respondents are in accord that he has never explicitly displayed evidence for having any prior experience in the arts. When describing him, Dladla says:

> I wouldn't know much about the background of Sifiso Ziqubu as far as performing arts is concerned or any knowledge is concerned about the performing arts but I gather that it's something he came with from Newcastle. I understand that also he was attending workshops at the Market Theatre…that's where he got some of the artistic aspects of the performing arts to come and impart them to the group (Dladla pers. comm., 2012).

Nkosi perceives Ziqubu's artistic skills transfer role in an intriguing way. He recognises that Ziqubu might have lacked professional artistic experience, but believes it was through his passion for the arts that he inspired participants to acquire more training, even beyond the confines of TCS:

> I guess maybe because I had a bit of a background from Nicro Youth Club… So when I went to Thesele High School I already had a bit of knowledge coming in, and my teacher who was very interested in the arts did not have as much knowledge in the arts but one thing that he did have was the passion for it and guiding us as young students all the time to go on (Nkosi pers. comm., 2012).

Ntsoko is unambiguous in her assertions that Ziqubu lacked a clear artistic background. She is, at the same time, certain about the teaching role that Ziqubu played in her own artistic development, as a kind of organic teacher:

> I think uThisha[14] Ziqubu at that time just wanted to do something. And one of the interesting [things]…he was also learning what he was doing. I think he was just driven by passion because now I look back at some of the things that we used to do there and I'm like really … I think he was just passionate about what he was doing.
>
> […] I remember uThisha would make us "project", all those disciplines that made you to… "believe in what you are saying" … So you became a performer, you became a believable performer and you build your confidence on that. So there's a lot, if I look at it from the theory perspective of the likes of Stanislavsky in theatre [terms], that's what we were doing but we didn't know why we were doing them (Ntsoko pers. comm., 2012).

[14] Translation in context (from Zulu): The Teacher.

Dladla, Ntsoko and Maphalala also mention the fieldwork programme of the Market Lab as the leading component of the skills transfer methodology. Dladla for instance admits,

> …working with the Laboratory, the Market Theatre Laboratory, they would send us a fieldworker to come and impart some knowledge or some aspects of theatre, like singing, movement, things like that (pers. comm., 2012).

Responding to the question on whether the teaching methods used by TCS worked for all the participants, Dladla adds,

> Ja, I think they worked for the participants. I think they did contribute a lot to what some of our members are today because the Lab did a sterling job by occasionally sending these fieldworkers to come and train the group members (pers. comm., 2012).

As a subsequent university degree graduate, Ntsoko does not only share Dladla's sentiments about the role of the Market Theatre Lab but is also able to lucidly recall its role when differentiating useful methods from those that were not,

> …there were those that were teaching methods and not teaching methods…the trial and error ones, and the ones that the Market Theatre would bring in.
>
> […] I think the Lab played a huge role when they sent their teachers to come and just give us lessons as well. So, I think we also had a bit of some theory that was coming from the Market Theatre Laboratory. You know just to see what we were doing …your theatre sports…so those things really contributed to one's development and confidence (Ntsoko pers. comm., 2012).

There was also an element of learning through watching others and seeking information outside the confines of TCS, which according to Dladla, TCS encouraged as much as possible:

> As a group, we also encouraged one another…whenever there was a workshop, especially [at] the Market Theatre on performing arts, we'd attend...contribute some money, hire a kombi and go to the Lab for a workshop (pers. comm., 2012).

Nkosi appreciates this method and feels that part of his route towards mastering his craft was watching others. This has also helped him with necessary inspiration to pursue his career:

> I've learnt a lot [pause] from watching as well, from watching theatre, not professional theatre, [not] the likes of Gibson Kente and all that. Whenever there was a play [pause] I was interested in going out there and watch. I mean there was a group from Zola, these guys used to perform in schools [pause] and I used to watch them, and I remember wanting to be part of that. So you don't just learn from doing, you learn also from watching other people doing stuff. So I must say I learnt a lot from just watching and eventually doing myself (Nkosi pers. comm., 2012).

5.3.2. Non-artistic skills and methodology

Nkosi suggests that social skills were transferred organically with no particular methodology applied:

> There was no curriculum, there was nothing that was written down for us to do but I think more than anything it was learning from each other, because I was learning from Ziqubu as much as these guys were learning from me…at the end of the day it was about you coming out of that group everyday with something, I mean we created each other's family…we were dealing with issues. That's what people don't understand, we were dealing with issues, everyday issues and how we understand these issues. We were teaching each other about HIV/ AIDS, we were teaching each other about a whole lot of other issues because we [were] performing these issues. So, I'll forever be grateful and feel honoured for being part of a bunch of people like that (pers. comm., 2012).

Moletsane appreciates her TCS experience for its role in getting her to better understand her society.

> One thing I learned, maybe I appreciated with TCS, is learning to deal with people and independence (pers. comm., 2012).

Moletsane also recognises the value of the teaching methods of 'creative societies', which I deduce, in this context, to refer to the teaching methods of TCS. Thus she proposes for the incorporation of TCS-type projects to certain grades of the current education system:

> ... creative societies should be encouraged at public schools, and creative societies should be a part of [the] curriculum from grade 7 (Moletsane pers. comm., 2012).

Ntsoko attributes her passion for the arts to TCS. She is also thankful to TCS for her confidence which she applies to both her professional and social life. Describing TCS, Ntsoko says,

> If I look back at the person that I was, I was to a large extent a very shy person and that opportunity of just acting allowed me to build my confidence, to be assertive…to be determined in life. I think it was an opportunity that took us away from the street. It enabled me to focus as a young person. I think if it was not [for] it, I would maybe have, had made wrong choices but I look back now and I think it crafted me for who I am now.
>
> I think from the passion Thesele[15] crafted in me as a performer I always wanted to study dramatic arts (pers. comm., 2012).

Maphalala believes she could not have been self-determined if she did not participate in TCS because there was lack of role models in her neighbourhood:

> Honestly, in my [residential] area there's no future, maybe I could have turned as one of those people who are hobo-like, who are so hopeless because there is no person that you see and say "I wanna be like this guy or this lady" … everybody is down … I think maybe I too [could have been] just one of these people.
>
> I've learnt to know how to take care of myself, not to depend on somebody else, just to say I'm gonna do this or I'm gonna go there, not to follow other person's path and all that …
>
> Just to be responsible, to take care of myself … not be one of the girls who when passing by the neighbourhood and most boys get to claim to have slept with … just to have dignity somehow (pers. comm., 2012).

Xosa says his discipline in life was due to participation in TCS, which systematically influenced his daily routine growing up:

> You'll knock from school at, let's say, two o'clock and you'd rehearse maybe up until half past four, sometimes even later than that because sometimes you'd have a show that is giving us a problem, where a scene is giving us a problem. With the teacher or director that we had … sometimes we wouldn't knock off early because we would really want to do that scene or that show the way he wanted it to be … So, by the time we get back home it's like half-past

[15] Thesele in this sense means TCS.

> five and something like that, so you must be ready for the day tomorrow, so that means like, for instance if you have socks, you must wash your socks and prepare, polish your shoes and what-what, you must be ready for tomorrow. If you have homework, you must start preparing your homework for tomorrow. So by the time you finished doing that, already it's supper time, you are hungry, must eat, go back to bed and tomorrow it's another day again … we always had something to do … (pers. comm., 2012).

As indicated in the beginning of this section, Maphalala and Xosa provide this study with enough motivation to make me wish to explore the theme of the transfer of skills by TCS, since they are the only two participants who graduated directly from a community arts project to working fulltime as professional artists. However the answers provided by the respondents affirm that even those who had some formal training – after their participation at TCS and before embarking on their careers – had used TCS teachings to advance their careers at some point. Nyerere (1968) points out that the strategic imperative to implement the principle of self-reliance was through the development of fellow community members. Thus, experienced artists from within the community who availed themselves to transfer skills to community-based emerging artists, in the absence of a basic educational and recreation skills transfer programmes, fulfil this role of assisting to develop fellow community members. Participants of TCS also learnt from each other, an act which Lochner describes as the 'each one teach one' principle and found it to have had an impact in the role of CAPs to democratise culture (2011: 56). My study does not, however, gather sufficient evidence to ascertain that TCS supported this form of learning as part of its preferred pedagogical strategy (but this is something that might be investigated in future).

5.4. The effects of TCS in career orientation: 'pursuing my purpose more than following any career'

A theory that community arts projects prepare for ensuing careers emerges from the studies of Fiske (1999), Matarasso (1997) and Weitz (1996). It this theory that guides me in my interpretation of the interviews in this section in order to explore how the main participants perceive the effects of participating in TCS, throughout their professional life.

As general point of departure, the main participants of this study are in no doubt that the teachings of TCS prepared them for and remained a part of their professional lives, as

illustrated by Xosa's reminiscence of Maseko in the previous section. I have looked for consistencies within each individual response in order to establish whether what they consider to be their special attributes in their careers have a relationship with TCS. I have also reflected on the career orientation that the main participants have taken.

When investigating professional artists in Australia, Bridgstock (2005) argues that artists have always been protean careerists, defined as people who manage their own career growth, as opposed to their career growth being managed by the organisation for which they work. Furthermore, following Hall's description (1976: 201, quoted in Bridgstock, 2005: 6) – where 'the protean person's own personal career choices and search for self-fulfilment are the unifying or integrative elements in his or her life [where the] criterion of success is internal (psychological success) not external' – I contend that the main participants have all shown clear signs of protean career orientation. These signs are also visible in Moletsane's case, the only main participant who never pursued a career in the arts subsequent to her participation at TCS but who has nevertheless remained a supporter of the arts.

In her interview, Ntsoko illustrates her protean career orientation, which is typified by the need to 'acquire skills that are transferable from employment opportunity to employment opportunity' (Bridgstock, 2005: 6), when she says,

> I think for me it's about… as they say "success is when opportunity meets preparation". I think it's about looking at opportunities and maximising to them. I think, one thing that I've been sober about in my life is that there [are] no limitations really, as long as I have the time and the ability to do certain things, I step into it. So I wouldn't say necessarily I have a career. I have a purpose. I'm pursuing my purpose more than following any career and everything that I do resonates with my purpose so when opportunity presents, I'll grab it. There's really no limitation, as is now I'm venturing into coaching. I've been passionate about it, I'm studying further into coaching and stuff like that. So, I can't say I am a coach… I do a lot of motivational speaking, I can't say I am motivational speaker [or] I'm a this. I'm just driven by a purpose (pers. comm., 2012).

Clearly as a typical protean careerist, Ntsoko diversifies her skills set in order to achieve greater career satisfaction in psychological terms, and not necessarily in monetary terms. The confidence that she claims to have acquired at TCS is also visible in her career orientation. When working as a motivational speaker in the corporate environment, for example, Ntsoko

finds this confidence to have beneficial effects in her career. Her competence in executing her work has a direct relation with TCS effects:

> The confidence, I think, [is] what helped me. I'm still gonna pursue a study around looking at how the arts impact confidence building because I feel…that what contributed to my confidence as a young person was the arts.
>
> You know to be eloquent, to express myself, to project. It's those [things] that people look at me now as a speaker and they're like "Wow! You are so clear in what you say, you [are] confident. How do you do that?" and I really give credit to the arts. I really [give] credit to me being at Thesele and me being exposed to acting… (Ntsoko pers. comm., 2012).

Ntsoko says although the discipline instilled at TCS was not methodologically related to theatre, it had a direct effect on her at the time when she worked as a professional actor:

> Every time before we do our lines we have to do physical exercise. *Thina besenza le iphysical exercise,*[16] it was not your warming your body, focusing and centering yourself, which is a technique that any performer must know but *thina besijima goed genoeg*[17]…so the teaching method there was just to say "you must be fit". But the thinking and the theory behind is how … you centre yourself as a performer and focus as a performer. I wouldn't say the teaching methods were really directly related to the outcome but the discipline was there and I think that contributed a lot…when I had an opportunity to go into professional play, when I was now working for a professional theatre company. Those same disciplines, I mean if you are an actor fulltime…you go in at nine o'clock, exercise until five o'clock, you'll do the same thing… I was already in the routine and it was easy for me. Had I not had that foundation I think my body was gonna go into shock, to say, "What is this about?" but I think Thesele contributed to that discipline that enabled me even when I entered into this professional space as a performer, I could adjust and could see some similarities and cope.

Maphalala draws her strength to lead when required by her current job from what she learnt from TCS. Responding to my question of whether she finds any of the skills learnt at TCS to be useful to her job, she says:

[16] Translation in context (from Zulu): 'We were doing the stamina- and muscle-building workout routines'.

[17] Translation in context (from Zulu/Afrikaans): 'We used to exercise very hard'.

> Yes because we do improvisation games, we do theatre skills, so if I'm given that opportunity... "Sisi, it's your chance today to [lead] improvisation games", I just go back to check[18] what we were doing there [at TCS] … and then I do them (pers. comm., 2012).

She continues to attribute to TCS's teachings her positive attitude towards her present job. She also does not foresee a career elsewhere other than the arts, a profession that requires her best attributes, singing and acting, which she had not developed anywhere else but at TCS. Therefore the teachings of TCS had effects on Maphalala to the extent that she has had no reason to look at any other means of earning a living. Out of ten she gives herself ten for singing and seven for acting in terms of her confidence level:

> I think I've developed it back then at TCS, when I've leant to be responsible. Then I've developed … [the attitude] to always be positive in whatever you are doing.
>
> … I don't think I'll see myself doing something else … I don't think I'll be able to do something else because I enjoy what I'm doing, I just don't like to stay seated, be quiet and busy in the computer and all that. I just like to be "free willy" … to be crazy at all times (Maphalala pers. comm., 2012).

Xosa too fits in well to the economic conditions that require protean careerists, in the sense of having skills that can be usable in different areas. The multi-skills effect can be traced back to TCS:

> At Thesele, now that we were doing shows we had drums, actually I can say I'm self taught … so we started drumming there.
>
> At Thesele we did not have this thing of we have six drummers and eight dancers. Even if you know that you were not a dancer, you'll have to learn the choreography … and so, by doing so it also helped us in a way that now you can end up multitasking. So you can dance, drum, sing and act at the same time …
>
> So with the experience that I got from Thesele, I am able to bring suggestions which are helpful to the company that I'm working for now (Xosa pers. comm., 2012).

[18] As revealed in this study, TCS had not written any teaching manual, therefore it can be deduced that to 'go back to check' refers to memory recollection.

When Nkosi talks about discipline, hard work and passion, he links the effects that TCS had on all the participants of this study in their careers today, particularly those who earn a living as artists in the creative industries. It is this passion that gives them the conviction that they will survive this industry despite its volatility. TCS has given them all the necessary tricks they may need to survive the industry, which may include team work, as Nkosi puts it,

> It helped me in that way … in fact […] this industry is about team playing, you can't play alone. [You can] know everything or think you know everything but you cannot get everything done by yourself, you need everybody else. So there's so much that I got taught …
>
> … you've got to get along with people, you work with people here. When they say in the industry that you are as good as your last job – you <u>are</u> as good as your last job. The discipline and hard work and the passion that never dies – sometimes you do get disillusioned … but you must keep reminding yourself why am I doing it in the first place … but to me I think more than anything is about … I'm able to get along (pers. comm., 2012).

The ability to easily work in a team is also seen as Maphalala's strong point by her former work supervisor, Mr Michael Marishane, the head of the *The Rise of the Nation* project. Describing her most impressive skills, he wrote that:

> As an artist she is always ready to give, especially in music and [acting]. She was nominated as one of the promising actress[es] in one of our festival performances, where we won two awards. Moreover, she is very influential in a very positive way to her colleague[s] and she easily get along with everyone. (Marishane pers. comm., 2012; Appendix 9)

Although Moletsane does not connect the effects of her protean career orientation to TCS, the assertions quoted from her in previous sections highlight, to a greater extent, the influence of TCS in her ensuing career path. Despite her search for better pay, which is uncharacteristic for protean careerists, she does display some protean traits such as career growth that is not motivated by a vertical pattern (Bridgstock, 2005):

> I get bored very quickly, always want to try new things, so now and again I will check if the[re] is something interesting and that pays well that I can do , and will just go for it (Moletsane pers. comm., 2012).

Some of her responses to my questions display more traits as follows:

> Th.M.: Would you consider changing you career in the future?

Ta.M.: Yes, I want to do forensic psychology, that's what I am studying now.

Th.M.: Are you successful in your career and, if so, why?

Ta.M.: Yes, I am career-wise, I have grown and I am still going to grow.

The effects of participating at TCS are largely discernible in the career orientation, and pursuit of career paths, of the various participants. As Bridgstock (2005) asserts, it is in the interest of protean careerist to be multi-skilled, and the main participants are all in a good position to fit in with the ever-changing demands of the job market of the modern economy.

5.5.Emergent themes for future research

My analysis of the interviews discussed in this chapter allowed for extrapolation of themes that help to respond to the research question of this study. As discussed in this chapter, and in the ensuing chapters, from these themes, I was able to, firstly, determine the role that TCS played in broadening the career scope of the main participants, secondly, the types of skills that the main participants learned at TCS and how they were methodologically transferred to participants, and lastly, the means by which the main participants apply the teachings of TCS in order to survive the social and professional challenges they encounter today in their lives. However, I acknowledge that this chapter also allowed for the exploration of emergent themes that could be located within the broader context of community arts studies. In this section I therefore highlight in brief themes that can be explored for purposes of future studies of this nature. I discuss these emergent themes further in chapters five and six.

Firstly, bar Moletsane, all the main participants attest to having been directly or indirectly employed by TCS, at some point during their participation at TCS. Thus, as evident in its Business Plan of 2005, TCS later repositioned itself in order to aim to create job opportunities for its partners. I discuss this role of TCS in the next chapter. However a theme that suggests that South African community arts projects, such as TCS, have a function to create job opportunities for the community in which it operates requires further exploration. Secondly, themes that are centred on pedagogical strategies need to be explored by future research. To develop participants, TCS employed a methodology to award outstanding performers – a pedagogy that Xosa found to be useful for his development as a professional performer. Also, this chapter indicated the ability of Ziqubu, being an unqualified arts teacher

to inspire the main participants to develop skills necessary to survive their career. His passion was described as the determining factor. It is therefore an area of future investigation to determine if the presence of passion for the arts in arts teachers could be a necessary requirement to enable them to develop successful professional artists. Lochner (2011) brings to the fore the 'each one teach one' pedagogical strategy of CAP. Therefore a need arises for a study to determine the commonness and successes of this pedagogy as this chapter exposes its traits at TCS.

Thirdly, to a large extent, the main participants perceived TCS, in its early days, as a haven for recreation but at the end it contributed positively towards their social and professional development. The question as to whether recreational facilities that are heavy on arts content can provide alternative spaces for professional development in deprived communities begs to be answered by future research.

Fourthly, many studies mentioned in this report have alluded to the claim that participating in community arts projects helps, amongst other things, to build one's confidence. Due to the limitations of the scope of this project, I could not explore this theme in the context of local projects in the mould of TCS.

Lastly, in this chapter I explored in detail the protean nature of the main participants in their career but did not establish that the protean careerists attributes such as multitasking, adaptable skills and teamwork could be purposefully developed in a community arts project.

These themes could be developed in future studies seeking to broaden the study of community arts projects in the South African context.

6. CHAPTER SIX - DISCUSSION

6.1.Accessibility imperative

Accessibility, allowing for an open participation of the community in cultural programmes remains the common dominator of community arts projects, globally; there are no strict prerequisites for participation (Van Erven, 2001). According to Hagg (2010), community arts projects in South Africa have had an easy-to-attain entry requirement of low entry fees, if any monetary requirement at all. TCS was no exception to this principle. None of its participants were expected either to audition or pay a fee upon joining TCS. It was an open-for-all affair. Ntsoko described TSC as

> a safe incubator that allowed us to explore our gifts and our talents as performers. You go to any theatre space, they'll ask you to audition. There was no audition there, you just wanted to act, whether you wanted to learn how to act or you think you know how to act…it was just a safe space to explore your gift as a performer (pers. comm., 2012).

Audition is a common practice in the field of theatre used to assess the level of talent of an applicant, be it for training or work purposes. In theatre schools and universities, those students who display a certain level of talent get selected to acquire further training and ultimately some sort of qualification, and those who display a higher level of talent than other applicants are privileged. As a community arts project, TCS did not apply the audition approach when assessing the level of talent for its participants. TCS did not have any criterion to separate those whose path is generally perceived with a level of inauspiciousness from those who show promise of succeeding in the arts practice. To uphold a practice that puts impediments for entry into its development activities in an environment that does not offer many concrete opportunities to its youth, could effectively perpetuate inequalities and promote elitism.

The main participants grew up in Soweto during a crime-beset era (Mokwena, 1991). Also, the political conditions of the time did not cater for government support of recreational programmes, and made it difficult for politicised communities in townships such as Alexandra and Soweto to accept support from the government (Van Robbroeck, 1991). The free-for-all access imperative was, therefore, very important, especially for the sort of talent-

driven individuals we observe in the main participants. These individuals preferred neither football nor netball, and thus areas in which to explore their talents would have been further narrowed had they not been able to enter TCS. Another logical option could have been crime for the main participants, given its propinquity in their everyday lives.

The female main participants all agree that participating in TCS helped them survive destructive peer pressure that engulfed those of their peers who did not fill their times with any extramural activities. Reminiscing, Ntsoko says:

> It enabled me to focus as a young person. I think if it was not for it, I would maybe have made wrong choices but I look back now and I think it crafted me for who I am now (pers. comm., 2012).

Moletsane paints a more despondent picture, when she thinks back as to what she could have done had she not had access to TCS that she perceived as a recreational programme:

> Honestly, I don't know, maybe I could have had lots and lots of babies, because there was not much to do at the time (pers. comm., 2012).

Thus, the access imperative proved decisive for the main participants' trajectories. Ntsoko and Nkosi, for instance, utilised what they learnt at TCS to audition successfully at the University of the Witwatersrand and the Market Lab in order to respectively qualify as dramatic arts students later on.

6.2.Development of professionals

I have observed in most career fields that degrees, diplomas and certificates – being qualifications issued by institutions of higher learning such as universities and colleges – generally distinguish a professional from a non-professional. It is common in the field of accounting, for example, to require a chartered accountant to further obtain a practicing certificate should he or she wish to consult to clients independently as a private consultant, as opposed to being a representative of a practicing firm (ICAEW member, 2012). In most developed countries, the professionalising of most careers in the creative industries is also characterised by, amongst other things, the practice of issuing qualifications such as degrees, diplomas and certificates (McCarthy et al., 2001; European Union, 2009). In South Africa,

qualifications that prepare individuals to participate in the creative industries are usually issued by universities and Further Education and Training (FET) colleges (CDP, 2012).

The use of qualifications issued by universities and FET colleges as criteria to distinguish professionals from non-professionals is not obvious in the South African performing arts sector because its former Apartheid government systems prevented black aspiring artistes from attaining qualifications from institutions of higher learning (Ainslee, n/d; Kros, 2010; Steinberg, 1994). To counter this in the performing arts arena, community-oriented theatre initiatives such as the Serpent Players and Gibson Kente in the 1960s and 1970s took it upon themselves to determine the development of professional black actors (Coplan, 2008). As a member of the Serpent Players, the internationally acclaimed John Kani may be a prime example of a black professional whose path was determined primarily through community-oriented theatre initiatives (ibid.), as he did not to my knowledge ever obtain a formal acting qualification.[19] According to a document produced by the Wits School of Arts (2010), John Kani obtained Honorary Doctorates in Philosophy from the University of Durban-Westville, in Literature from Rhodes University, and again in literature from the University of Cape Town between 1995 and 2006. However, it was not this string of qualifications that distinguished him from non-professional theatre practitioners. In determining black professionals, initiatives such as the Serpent Players and Gibson Kente did not do so by issuing scholarly qualifications to performers.

TCS continued the role of developing and producing professional performers organically in the 1990s, and did this is in spite of institutions like the Pretoria Technikon (now Tshwane University of Technology), The University of the Witwatersrand and the Market Lab having started to train and qualify black aspirants as professional performers. Two participants of this study, Maphalala and Xosa, are the direct products of TCS's developmental work.

In this section I will discuss the developmental role of TCS in orientating its participants along a path of professionalism in the creative industries. Given the difficulties associated with the instability of employment in the sector of the performing arts, it will also be useful

[19] The inference is drawn from the fact that in the 1970s when Kani started to perform professionally, blacks could still not attain a formal acting qualification in South Africa.

to look into the mechanisms developed by these participants to survive this industry and how TCS's teachings could have influenced them in this regard. Thus I will also explore their modus operandi for success.

As opposed to a desire to produce professional performers, the founding desire of TCS was to explore an extra-curricular activity other than sport. As Nkosi puts it,

> … a lot was soccer and netball for the ladies but nothing else for people that were not interested in those sports. Which is when we started as students…we approached a teacher whose name is Sifiso Ziqubu to try and come up with a drama group of some sort, something we [can] do as an extra mural activity [since] others were going for soccer (pers. comm., 2012).

Despite its ensuing aims of developing an ensemble of professional performers, TCS never operated as a formal training institution (Miracle Theatre, 2005). Like Kani, Maphalala and Xosa did not wait for a formal qualification before working professionally in the creative industries. Even Ntsoko's debut on a professional stage in 1995 happened before she was enrolled at the University of the Witwatersrand and graduated as a dramatic arts student. Cases like these, which date back to the 1960s, provide this study with an interesting question to explore. What was the skilling methodology applied by informal training institutions such as TCS? Before exploring the skilling methodology of TCS, it is worth identifying the skills that the participants of this study claim to have acquired at TCS. As aforementioned, when Nkosi and other learners initiated TCS to counter the insufficiency of extramural activities in their school, drama was the primary activity on which the founding of this initiative was premised. When a decision to establish TCS was taken by these learners, Nkosi had already been exposed to drama activities through community-based initiatives such as Nicro. Thus his influence was apparent in getting TCS emerging as a drama-based project. Ntsoko reckons the then popular musical play, *Sarafina*, which had just been adapted into a film, had some influence in shaping TCS into a traditional theatre project and, therefore, incorporating singing and dance in its list of activities. Referring to uMhlupheki, TCS's very first production,

> [It was] your *Sarafina* days … I think that play was influenced by *Sarafina* more than anything else (pers. comm., 2012).

Dance was accompanied by the authentic sound of a drum, an instrument for which Xosa developed interest. From experimenting with the instrument, Xosa identified drumming as yet another career influencing skill at TCS. He believes that even other TCS participants, who developed the ability to play a drum, learned valuable lessons as a result of experimenting with it.

It is established in this study that although TCS got to regard itself as a theatre project, its scope of skills transfer went beyond the arts parameters. Moletsane remembers that her leadership skills were developed at TCS while she undertook duties as a personal assistant to directors.

Whereas Nkosi recalls the exchange of life skills[20] at TCS:

> … it gave me such an opportunity to learn so much about life. So it was about life skills more than anything as well, because we taught each other so much as students and the teacher that was involved with us … (pers. comm., 2012).

As identified in this report, TCS applied various methods to develop skills of individuals. Xosa, for instance, did not attend any lecture teaching him a technique of playing a drum. Likewise, Moletsane was not taught to work as a personal assistant. Both these individuals took up challenges to execute required tasks and as a result were learning skills that are today valuable to their careers. In Lochner (2011), this method is also identified within the skills-transfer methods of the Community Arts Project (CAP). When teaching 'people with no artistic background', CAPs would let them 'learn by doing' (Lochner, 2011: 93). Accordingly in this report I refer to this method as the 'learn-by-doing method'. I identify three other methods, being what I refer to as the 'partnership-based method', 'learn-by-observing method' and 'learn externally'. In the following paragraphs I provide more details on all these methods and their possible effects.

Upon experimenting with a drum, Xosa developed a passion for it and henceforth he participated in a number of community-based drumming workshops such as the Ipelegeng Community Centre-hosted Step Afrika! initiative, which partnered with Soweto Dance

[20] Social skills as opposed to professional skills.

Theatre (SDT). Today, Xosa has broadened his career continuum as he works both as an actor, and as a drummer in musical bands. The learn-by-doing method proved effective as it allowed a participant room for expansion and instilled the ability to crossover (Markusen et al., 2006). This means that participants such as Xosa acquired enough skills set to enable them to multitask in a given job, and to work from one sector to another – in this case, from theatre to music.

I consider the trust given to participants to take up jobs for which they had not proven competence as tantamount to risk-taking. In this way a participant operates within a broad framework where a participant is allowed to fail and try again. TCS identified various talents – even if they were not artistic – like that of Moletsane. It also gave participants who had interest in performing certain non-artistic tasks the opportunity to do so. Accordingly, skills and passion for these duties would be developed. Like Xosa, Moletsane also took this experience further into her career. She undertook great responsibilities in her current job for which she only acquired university qualifications when she was already employed. The confidence to risk failure by taking professional responsibilities without prior training provides evidence of this method of learn-by-doing.

TCS created informal partnerships, which provided it with its most significant skilling methodology. Two types of partners featured in this methodology, being individual and organisation partners. Individual partners constituted lesser-known and well-known community-based actors, dancers and choreographers. Zwelibanzi Maseko was a lesser-known yet very experienced community-based artiste who partnered with TCS as a source of acting skills. On the other hand, Thulani Didi and Nkosana Mzolo of *Sarafina* fame were the better-known community-based theatre practitioners who specialised in drama and dance, respectively. Equally, better and lesser-known experienced singers, actors and dancers frequented TCS to facilitate skills-transfer classes. A similar approach was utilised in Nkosi's previous community arts project, Nicro. Nkosi recalls the significance of this approach in his life,

> They used to send a lot of actors [who] were professional actors at the time, people like the late Ramolao Makhene, […] Arthur Molepo, […] Sol Rachilo, [and] Tale Motsepe who was a

> Wits student at the time, so they used to come and give us some classes in terms of acting and theatre.
>
> And what keeps me here [in this industry] is because I really was taught by people that educated me about the industry and how the industry can go bad (pers. comm., 2012).

Taking a slightly different path than that of Nkosi who furthered his training at the Market Lab, Xosa and Maphalala represent similar effects as described by Nkosi above. They too have shown the survival character that sees them being sustained by this industry. It took Maphalala more than eight years of joining TCS before she considered herself a professional. Unlike Ntsoko and Moletsane, these other three main participants did not give themselves any career option other than in the performing arts, and TV and Film. For Nkosi, this move was deliberate as he puts it, 'I had nothing to fall back on, I had to make this work by hook or crook' (pers. comm., 2012). This study does not tell us much about Maphalala and Xosa's motives for having lacked an alternative career, however an inference can be drawn that by learning from experienced performers, these participants were informed about the realities of the industries. They therefore pursued a career in the performing arts knowing very well what to expect.

As a student at the Market Lab and, therefore, being a more exposed TCS participant, Nkosi also added value as a source of skills, which were transferred through such methods to TCS participants. Working with such individuals who were more knowledgeable, TCS realised the benefits of acquiring knowledge externally. It then participated in the inaugural community theatre festival of the Market Lab in 1992, through which it learnt of the Market Lab's fieldwork initiative. Launched in 1991 by Barney Simon and John Kani, the Market Lab exploited the value of using experienced performers to transfer skills to the less advantaged theatre aspirants from the townships, hence the creation of the fieldwork initiatives (Appendix 7). As part of its outreach development programme, the Market Lab would utilise the services of experienced and professional theatre performers by sending them to community theatre groups that participated in their festivals. TCS was one of these groups that benefited by skills-transfer initiatives. The Market Lab also used its graduates to work as fieldworkers between acting jobs. In this way it created employment opportunities for the general populace of actors who were based in the Transvaal (ibid.). This initiative became very significant in the development of TCS as an ensemble and particularly in the

development of individuals, including the main participants. The Market Lab became more of a formal partner of skills-transfer of TCS through the fieldwork programme. The significance of this partnership was highly appreciated by TCS participants, considering that Ziqubu, the founding leader of TCS, seemed to have been driven more by passion for the arts than knowledge to transfer theatre skills.

Nkosi speaks of how he got inspired and encouraged to pursue his passion for acting through 'watching others' (pers. comm., 2012). Also, TCS as a group regularly visited the Market Theatre to watch others perform. The TCS leader who participated in this study, Jabulani Dladla, believes that going to observe others perform increased the understanding of participants as to the amount of hard work required to become an actor. This way of learning worked as means to inspire aspirants to want to learn more and pursue their dreams of becoming performers. I refer to this method as 'learn-by-observation method' for participants, meaning that students did not only watch to consume the aesthetic value of a performance but also to observe the techniques used to execute that performance.

Another method that this study identifies is the so-called 'learning externally'. Dladla points out that participants would make financial contributions towards transportation to the Market Lab or any other institution that conducted performance workshops. In addition, participants were encouraged to learn through this method of going outside TCS to acquire knowledge and skills. Participants who could not attend external workshops would in turn learn from those who did, which interrelated with the each-one-teach-one method. Learning from outside had obviously increased depth in the artistic knowledge of participants.

The main participants find the skills acquired at TCS useful not only in their career but also in their lives more broadly. Abilities to think and act independently, to be confident, and to work in teams are considered to be useful by the main participants, not only to navigate through their careers but also in facing social challenges. The performing skills of Xosa, Maphalala, Ntsoko and Nkosi, which they have since adapted into their careers, can be traced back to TCS, as discussed elsewhere in this report. The way in which these participants interpreted the teachings of TCS that carried these skills for the benefit of their careers will be the next point of discussion.

When, elsewhere in this report, Nkosi attributes his capacity to survive this industry to the partnership method, he makes mention of a university student, Tale Motsepe, as one of those who used to come to his community arts initiative to transfer theatre skills. A student in this instance – who had apparently possessed more theoretical knowledge than the participants of community arts – acknowledges the foresight of community arts in partnering with the academe. For instance, an NGO / organisation called Drama for Life (DFL) is engaged in a number of outreach projects at a community-based level, working generally with community theatre projects. DFL is based at and has a professional relationship with the University of the Witwatersrand. Its staff composition both at an administrative and performance level is generally made up of university graduates, especially from the University of the Witwatersrand.

Ntsoko who honed her skills and improved her knowledge at University of the Witwatersrand after participation at TCS is not only appreciative of her acting skills in pursuing her motivational speaking but also in her leadership-coaching career. Also working as a qualified actor, she believes her discipline was acquired more through TCS than the teachings of University of the Witwatersrand.

Xosa and Maphalala never advanced their knowledge through formal training like Ntsoko and Nkosi did. Their skills to survive a career in the creative industries came more from TCS than anywhere else, notwithstanding that some of these survival skills could have been developed while they were working as professionals. Their survival in the industry without formal qualifications is pertinent to contemporary debates that seek to find the line between professional and non-professional performers along the criteria borrowed from other fields such as medicine as practiced in the western world. In the field of medicine, for example, one is not considered a professional medical practitioner based on talent only – you are obliged to undergo training and be qualified by means of a certificate issued by an institution of higher learning. This is despite the existence of African traditional medical practice, which is based on talent, and was traditionally practiced without a formal qualification (Richter, 2003). In the field of theatre in South Africa, Maphalala and Xosa not only are considered as professionals but have also displayed a tremendous ability to survive in it alone, with ‘nothing to fall back on’ (Nkosi, pers. comm., 2012).

Mr Michael Marishane, who was once Maphalala's employer, did not consider the question of qualifications when hiring Maphalala: he was just persuaded by 'her degree of professionalism and talent' (Marishane, 2012). Despite her current success in her career, however, Maphalala believes that her job is threatened by her lack of qualification. The new managing director of Themba, the company for which she works, has expressed his preference for formally trained actors. Maphalala concludes that it would be in her best interest to get a qualification. She expresses her fears and intentions:

> The people who are now recruited [at Themba] have degrees, diplomas and all that, so [that] is a threat…It might be possible that I might lose my job because I haven't got any [qualification], if I don't go to school…the MD [Managing Director] is one these people who wants degrees and all that. For me to survive at Themba I have to go school (pers. comm., 2012).

In this case, getting a qualification is not a step towards professionalism but rather a forced move to conform to the westernised standard of professionalism. Herein lies a paradox: that those who adhere to these standards may in some way be betraying the culture of unqualified, yet competent, performers. As the GDS (2011)[21] points out, the barrier to culture and the economy is one of the challenges that the city experiences, especially amongst the township communities. Given the cost associated with tuition fees in the universities and FETs, education becomes a luxury for most communities of Johannesburg who are still battling with basic needs (GDS, 2011)[22]. Therefore, insistence on qualification stands to perpetuate the inability of capable artists, such as Maphalala, from participating in the economic mainstream and accessing cultural professions.

6.3.Within the creative economy

Following the trends in developed countries such as the UK, Canada and Australia, the democratic post-1994 South Africa has incorporated its arts, culture and heritage activities into the creative industries cluster. These activities were incorporated into this cluster by

[21] Growth and Development Strategy of the City of Johannesburg.

[22] Quality basic education is still only accessible to more affluent communities and those who can afford private schools in South Africa.

virtue of their having a creative component in terms of the production of consumable products or services (Gauteng Creative Mapping Project, 2007). This criterion is consistent with the accepted South African definition of the creative industries revealed in the Creative Industries Development Framework of Gauteng Provincial Government:

> By Creative Industries we refer to that bundle of activities where creativity is a prime condition of its existence. The Creative Industries therefore range across traditional artistic activities to electronic media and communications and into a growing range of business and associated services […] Thus in analysing the Creative Industries as industries we are not only concerned with the front end of creative production – the ideas [of] people or performers – but also those who have to turn ideas into products, those who market and those who provide outlets for cultural products to be seen and sold (2005: 7).

The Gauteng Government has adapted this definition from the one provided by 'the Creative Strategy Group (1998) which conducted the Cultural Industries Growth Strategy research' (Gauteng Creative Mapping Project, 2007:27) in order to be consistent with the terminology shift from cultural industries to creative industries.

In South Africa like in the aforementioned developed countries, the creative industries have been recognised as an integral part of the creative economy (Joffe & Newton, 2008). This common recognition has necessitated the desire by governments such as the British Department of Arts Media, Culture Sport to assess the value of the creative industries within the creative economy and its contribution to national economies (Gauteng Creative Mapping Project, 2007). Both the South African National, and the Gauteng Provincial, Departments of Arts and Culture have since followed this example as it is evident in their jointly commissioned Gauteng Creative Mapping Project of 2007, which intends to 'essentially provide the economic data which shows the current value of the creative economy' (ibid.: 10).

Findings by most developed nations reveal that the creative economy is one of the leading economic stimulants of a nation (Mzansi's Golden Economy, 2011; Higgs at al., 2008). This is due to, amongst other factors, its ability to create jobs (Joffe & Newton, 2008; Holden, 2007; Creative Industries Development Framework of Gauteng Provincial Government, 2005). Recently the South African government through its Ministry of Arts and Culture has

worked towards the development of a national creative economy strategy that can have a significant contribution to the country's economic growth. In this regard the Ministry has since published a working document, known as Mzansi's Golden Economy Contribution of the Arts, Culture and Heritage sector in the New Growth Path. This document is also referred to as Mzansi's Golden Economy. The incumbent minister, Paul Mashatile, believes that by repositioning arts, culture and heritage activities, the creative economy in South Africa will prevail as a noteworthy contributor in the country's socio-economic goals, and

> never again will the cultural and creative industries be relegated to the back banner [sic] of our national priorities. From now on, the arts, culture and heritage sector will take its rightful place; at the core of the national effort to build a socially inclusive society and to contribute to economic growth and job creation (MGE report, 2012)

The New Growth Path (NGP) as the country's economic strategic framework has set out to create five million jobs by 2020.

In this section, I will therefore locate TCS as a community arts project within the context of creative economy and its contribution thereto, with particular reference to the main participants. When assessing the creative economy, Markusen et al. (2006: 5) observe that 'community-based artists are often left out of surveys'. It would be illogical if in South Africa, where community arts has been ubiquitous, we did not consider the agents within community arts projects, be they producers, exploiters or consumers, when assessing or measuring the contribution of creative industries in the creative economy. Cited as a research limitation by the Gauteng Creative Mapping Project (GCMP) (2007: 16), 'the lack of a comprehensive population list of creative sector organisations [makes] the databases compiled for this project…likely to undercount those individuals or organisations that are informal, small, part-time and do not belong to a representative body'. Therefore the informal milieu in which TCS operated gave little room for the provision of necessary information that could give a national or regional strategic direction which effectively represents projects such as TCS – projects without any affiliation whatsoever to any recognisable structure such as a community arts centre.

It is noteworthy though that a proposed policy framework, known as the National Policy Framework of the Development of Community Arts Centres and Programmes (NPFDCACP)

does attempt to provide a strategic direction for such ubiquitous projects. While it is not explicit with regards to a relationship between community arts projects and the creative economy, it does lay a foundation for future research work that would penetrate deeper into community arts projects such as TCS, instead of perceiving the community arts movement through tangible community arts centres. According to multiple recent reports of the Department of Arts and Culture (2009/ 2010, 2010/2011, and 2011/ 2012), this framework was approved by the Minister but is yet to be implemented. To date there is no evidence that this report has been or will be implemented, and until it is implemented, its intentions remain subdued. Without a framework that strictly take projects such as TCS into account, the true impact of such projects gets overlooked and consequently community arts gets perpetually undervalued in terms of its economic potential. This only serves to contribute to the ever-visible mystification of the true value of the creative economy. I note that in the 1990s there were at least four projects similar to TCS that operated within the three-kilometre radius of TCS's operational vicinity. These included four youth and children dance troupes, ran by Jackie Mbuyiselwa Semela and Carly Dibakwane (Soweto Dance Theatre), Arco Griffiths Matlala (Arco Dance Theatre), Bheki Thwala and 'Shakes', and Peter Ngwenya's drama group, Soweto Youth Drama Society (Maphalala, 2012; Sichel, 2012; 2013). The GOMACC[23] Chairperson's report of 2012 reported an active existence of more than 7850 participants belonging to more than 242 projects like these in Gauteng between March 2011 and February 2012 (GOMACC, 2012).

There are two categories that can be derived from the contribution of TCS to the creative industries. The first one is groundwork. In this category, TCS prepared and ultimately provided both the performers and consumers in the performing arts sector. Four of the main participants work as producers, performers or both in the sector. Moletsane, who has not pursued a career in the creative industries, has remained a fairly devoted consumer of cultural products and services. Dladla says that Moletsane 'is still a supporter of performing arts, in that whenever there's a performing arts function, she would like us to invite her' (pers. comm., 2012).

[23] Gauteng Organisation for Community Arts and Culture Centres.

In the TV and Film sector, Nkosi for example is a role player in its value chain (Joffe & Newtown, 2008). Joffe & Newton identify different role players and their functions in the Film and TV sector which are illustrated by means of the value chain analysis (2008). The value chain analysis is comprised of five stages in which role players are positioned, namely the beginnings, productions, circulation/distribution, delivery mechanism and audience reception. The 'beginnings' are where ideas are conceived by artists (Gauteng Creative Mapping Project: 6). As co-creator of the movie, *White Wedding*, Nkosi features in the beginnings of this value chain.

The second category is job creation. As already discussed, the contribution of the creative economy to a nation's economy is also measured by the number of jobs it creates. Steadily, developing countries like South Africa position their creative industries within the overall national economic development policy imperative (Mzansi's Golden Economy, 2011). As indicated in earlier paragraphs, Mzansi's Golden Economy is explicit about its intentions to align the national arts and culture agenda with the NGP that aims to create five million jobs in ten years:

> [the Arts and Culture Ministry's] previous work done to assess the sector… has been used to …develop a strategy and make specific proposals, including new large scale interventions to reposition the DAC and optimise its contribution to the new growth path.
>
> […] Tourism and other high level services are identified as a priority area to create jobs, through a series of partnerships between the state and the private sector. The cultural and creative industries will contribute to the creation of jobs in this priority area (ibid.: 6).

In order to enhance such a strategic approach, it is important to have a better understanding of the role played by projects such as TCS in contributing to the creation of jobs, by means of partnerships. TCS managed to create jobs for the main participants, particularly for Maphalala, Ntsoko, Xosa and Nkosi. Xosa and Maphalala, who remained at TCS longer than the rest of the main participants, were involved in most of the income-generating artistic ventures of TCS between 1996 and 2004. Nkosi describes these ventures as 'not the kind of work that will make you rich but it was able to sustain you…a lot of people [used it well] by building homes, helping at their houses and helping their parents' (pers. comm., 2012). He and Ntsoko, separately, got their first overseas job experience through TCS's international collaborative work. Even though his involvement with TCS was limited to his occasional

passing of knowledge to developing participants in the project, Nkosi got his only job at TCS in a production called *Fragments*, which toured some parts of France. Ntsoko's only TCS job was through an artistic relationship between TCS and another community-based project, Victory Siyanqoba of Alexandra. She worked on the project as an exchange artist representing TCS. Adding to Nkosi's sentiment that the job creation element of TCS had kept them financially sustained, Xosa gave hope to his parents and changed their negative perception of his participation at TCS:

> I could do a lot of stuff at home with the money that I earned at Thesele … and at home they started seeing me as somebody who has got a job. At the first, I remember they used to say, "Hey, you must get yourself a job!" but now when you start bringing and buying things for them at home, that's when they realise… and refer to your activity as a job (pers. comm., 2012).

Most of TCS's job creation ventures for these participants were through collaboration with international theatre companies and individuals such as Les Piétons and Sophie Loucachevsky of France, and Fransbrood and Archidée of Belgium. Some of them were through partnerships with government campaigns around HIV and AIDS. Export value, which is considered an important feature of the creative economy, can be deduced from the TCS experience of job creation through working abroad collaboratively or in partnership with international theatre companies (Gauteng Creative Mapping Project, 2007).

Nkosi points out that as a TV producer he has worked with most of the TCS-developed and prepared talent, and Xosa was referred to his current job by a former colleague at TCS. Judging by the emphasis put on job creation, especially for youth in the South African national agenda, the seriousness in which MGE strategy will be treated is through evidence of job creation by the creative industries. Mr Zwelinzima Vavi, the general secretary of South Africa's biggest federation of trade unions, Congress of South African Trade Union (COSATU), refers to the scourge of unemployment in South Africa as a 'ticking time bomb' (Pressely, 2011). Therefore the regular flow of jobs in the creative industries remains an important area of consideration by all stakeholders. This regular flow can be enhanced by such lifelong networks generated from projects such as TCS, as it is the case with former TCS participants who work for Nkosi, and Xosa who has secured his current job thanks to a former colleague at TCS.

6.4.Aesthetics of experimentation in the creative economy

TCS participated in a number of community-based and developmental theatre showcase platforms. The first of which were the Volkswagen Music Active performing arts programme for high schools in 1992. This gave TCS their official debut stage appearance as an ensemble. The fringe programme of the Grahamstown Festival[24] followed in 1993, which was the first showcasing experience outside Gauteng. There were many other platforms on which TCS showcased successfully. However it was the Best of the Laboratory, the community Theatre Festival of the Market Lab of 1993 and the Joburg Civic Theatre Curtains Up Community Theatre Festival (Curtains Up) of 1996 that were of greatest significance. The competitive nature of these showcasing platforms, in particular was of significance. TCS came out victorious in both these contests. Assessed primarily on aesthetics, Papuchi and Heaven's Vault were the productions that were respectively showcased in the Best of the Laboratory and the Curtains Up. The Best of the Laboratory earned TCS's, Papuchi a two-week professional run at the Market Theatre Laager stage as part of the prize for winning. Similarly for winning, Heaven's Vault ran for four weeks at the Peter Roos stage[25] of the Joburg Civic Theatre[26] following a two-week extension. I use the term professional in this instance to denote the fact that these plays ran for a fee, in other words audiences were charged to view them.

In reviewing the Best of the Laboratory showcases (Appendix 8), in the Tonight section of *The Star* newspaper, Adrian Sichel wrote about TCS's offering:

> Thesele Creative Society's Papuchi was a real gem (The Market Theatre Foundation, n/d).

Despite this history of aesthetic success, this study found no evidence to suggest that TCS had ever aimed to present a certain quality of aesthetics. This aesthetic success was somehow accidental. About TCS, Vanessa Cooke, the then head of the Market Lab recalls:

[24] In 2002 the Grahamstown Festival was renamed The National Arts Festival (www.wikipedia.org).

[25] Now known as the space.com.

[26] Now known only as Joburg Theatre.

> I always found their work very interesting, not always brilliant but that is not always the point in those situations…they always had interesting way of staging things, for me, because they hadn't had access to physical theatre and all of those things but they seem to have a style, Thesele (pers. comm., 2012).

The aesthetic value that defined TCS productions, which may have been viewed by some as 'not always brilliant' was carried through 'a style'. From this, inference can be drawn that the style employed by TCS induced interest and was comprehensible, albeit could not be defined along the known theatre typologies such as the physical theatre (Murray & Keefe, 2007). In this paper, I do not intend to define and locate the style of TCS within a certain typology but rather I use such mystery, together with Sichel's review and the fact that TCS's works were adjudicated to qualify for a professional stage, to point out one of several opportunities in which community arts could have been exploited within the arts, culture and heritage sector. Over and above its embracing socio-economical development position, community arts could be exploited as an arts entity for arts sake. Lochner (2011) argues that the aesthetic value contained in community arts projects presents opportunities to democratise arts. He points to the predisposition of the South African arts sector towards the westernised 'high arts', which he argues is elitist in character and therefore finds its market in the privileged minority. This, according to Lochner (2011), marginalises the majority and is plainly undemocratic. The aesthetic value of TCS should have been exploited beyond just showcases at institutions such as the Market and Joburg Civic theatres – institutions which were then and to an extent still are today associated with 'high arts', geographically inaccessible to most communities. Most communities comprising potential consumers of arts are located in the outskirts of Newtown and Braamfontein, and in areas such as Soweto, where the transport system infrastructure remained unreliable.

To address this question of inaccessibility, the national cultural policy, the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage of 1996 provided framework to build and renovate 42 community arts centres nationwide, through the Reconstruction and Development Project (RDP) funding. These community arts centres were built or renovated in areas where most communities resided. In their studies of these community arts centres, researchers such as Hagg (2002, 2004 and 2010) and Gaylard (2004) found that these centres did not meet the expectation of the White Paper. Specific to this section of this study, failure to respond to the

aforementioned inaccessibility is one of the shortcomings of most of these centres identified by Hagg (2002, 2004, 2010) and Gaylard (2004). Most of these RDP centres became daunting buildings which occupied space but were never themselves occupied by the cultural content. Therefore TCS and its aesthetics, as presented through its productions such as Papuchi and Heaven's Vault, should have been envisioned and financially supported for the role of providing the cultural content in these centres. Lochner (2011: 149) writes:

> Arguably CAP, along with other community organisations, still had the potential to build a 'South African aesthetic' from the grassroots in a post-apartheid state if it was properly supported for this role.

In support of this statement, I furthermore argue that the role of community arts projects to build a self-determined aesthetic via the optimal utilisation of community arts centres, not only culture will be made accessible to the broader community of South Africa but cultural markets will be diversified and new markets penetrated. To localise culture along the framework of programming these 'new aesthetics' in the community arts centres is to make available the opportunity to activate the economic participation at a community level. Instead of aspiring to develop a career within the framework of 'high arts', the artistic participants of this study would be getting regular employment opportunities within their communities, and continuously work towards the promotion of their unique and self-determined aesthetics. The local residents would be positioned as prime consumers of their work, with visiting audiences contributing to the generating of local tourism. This could consolidate the position of community arts in the creative economy. It is worth noting though that part of the reasons that these centres failed to meet the expectations of the White Paper is that their infrastructural designs were not always conducive for arts performances (Hagg & Selepe, 2002:17). Therefore in order to successfully programme cultural content in these centres, there is a need to mend these centres to meet standards of artistic performances.

The city of Joburg has recently built the Soweto Theatre, a fully-fledged theatre within the township where there is a large concentration of potential theatre goers. Ntsoko suggests that this space could be opportune for the community theatre self-determined aesthetics,

> For the first time Soweto has got a theatre…imagine if we had that opportunity many years ago. Now it's just a building next to a mall…we don't have community [theatre] work that

> needs to be showcased there. Maybe it's also a challenge again to some of us who've had this opportunity to come back and say "what are we doing"? Maybe it's our time to come up with those theatre groups… (pers. comm., 2012).

This adds to the potential relationship between community arts projects and Joburg municipality's new theatre, because a theatre situated in a community space stands to benefit from such a relationship. In this way, there is an opportunity here to 'attract and develop new audiences', being one of the founding objectives of Soweto Theatre (Business Case, 2010). This seems possible, however, only where community arts projects characterised by the 'new aesthetic' are supported financially, as expressed in previous paragraphs.

7. CHAPTER SEVEN – CONCLUSIONS

As this report begins from the premise, and consistently argues at different levels, that TCS had a great influence in the career paths of the main participants, I confirm that it played a significant role in supporting and broadening their career development. I have furthermore identified different types of skills that the main participants gained at TCS, and the ways in which they are individually making use of them to navigate through their professional and social lives. By doing so, I have satisfied the question around the potential long-term benefits of participating in community arts projects. Engaging with various publications, particularly the recent work of Lochner (2011), this report has revealed that TCS has played a role towards crafting of the new aesthetics, which Lochner (2011) argues is one of the ingredients required to democratise culture. I have, therefore, argued that if community arts projects such as TCS enjoyed adequate government support, the new aesthetics would not only work towards democratising culture, but would also be at the forefront of encouraging local creative economic activity. Furthermore, works that describe the creative industries in detail have helped to expose the often-missed opportunity to highlight the full potential of South African community arts projects as a contributor to the creative economy. In this report I contextualise the ideology and practice of TCS in the broader political arena of both pre- and post-1994 South Africa. Here I expand upon conclusions drawn from these findings.

When Apartheid deprived black South Africans of their intrinsic right to cultural expression, community arts projects intervened. TCS was a means by which the community arts movement responded to the deprivation of arts education at the basic level of the Bantu Education system in the early 1990s. Deprivation of arts and culture education at a basic level of an education system restricted the career orientation and growth of those oppressed by that system. Indeed it was the intention of the Bantu Education system to restrict black labour within the confines of serving the white group. Thus TCS has played a role in ameliorating the impact of that system and expanding the career scope and prospects of its participants.

Without a suitable facility, equipment or financial support, the learners of Thesele High School resisted the restrictions of Bantu Education and established TCS, a community theatre project that not only provided them with extra-mural activities, but also with social and

artistic skills which the main participants found useful in their daily lives and into the longer term. From these TCS-developed skills, the main participants find that they are able to fit into a political and socio-economic environment that is very different to the one they experienced in their youths. It is clear that participating in TCS had a bearing on the future survival of the main participants. For example, Kenneth Mncedisi Nkosi, one of the main participants, already identified his career path while at TCS and left high school to pursue a career that led him to become integrated in the country's economic mainstream. Two other main participants, Mandla Innocent (Sdala) Xosa and Miriam Vangile (Sisi) Maphalala, also escaped the current scourge of unemployment engulfing South Africa, despite having not completed their formal tertiary education.[27] With the skills they acquired at TCS they are employable as professional artists within the creative industries. In South Africa today, despite certain educational policy correctives in the post-Apartheid era, the cost involved in acquiring a formal qualification through the higher learning education system still filters the majority of the population out of the professional working environment and ultimately out of the mainstream economy. Therefore if young people succeed in their careers in the sense of becoming active participants in the mainstream economy solely or primarily due to their participation in community arts projects, this is reason enough for such projects to receive the support they require to exist and flourish. It is furthermore worth making an emphasis on the significance of TSC's usage of inexpensive skills transfer methods. This demonstrates that it is possible to negotiate the productive space between the 'formal' and 'informal' educational sectors through the example of successful community arts projects, and the need in countries like South Africa to find novel solutions to connect the mainstream with the periphery for greater economic stability.

The skills that were transferred through TCS to the main participants were both artistic and non-artistic. Artistic skills included acting, singing, dancing and drumming. Non-artistic skills included the building of self-confidence, discipline, the ability to deal with peer pressure, and an expanded knowledge of youth challenges of the time such as crime and HIV/AIDS. Despite a lack of material resources, TCS made use of what it had at its disposal

[27] Between January and March 2013, 25.2% South Africans were reported to be unemployed (Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2013).

to transfer these skills to participants. By virtue of having been started by learners and a teacher of Thesele High School, after schooling hours, TCS had access to one of the school's classrooms. They used this classroom as their training studio at no charge and this facilitated its development as a project initiated by and for the community.

To transfer artistic skills, it relied on informal partnerships with experienced community-based artists and the Market Theatre Laboratory. TCS accessed skills from these partners at no cost whatsoever. The same approach was used in acquiring non-artistic skills. Because of this practice of resourcefulness, I have drawn the conclusion that the spirit of Nyerere's (1968) ideology of African socialism, prevailed within TCS and its community. According to Nyerere (1968) individuals in disadvantaged communities can achieve more if they work as a collective instead of competing for limited resources. Here TCS benefited from the generosity of like-minded and like-hearted individuals in the community and organisations. Given that the legacy of Apartheid has made it difficult for black communities to access the necessary resources to see them succeed, an enabling environment for individuals and organisations to contribute skills and resources to less fortunate individuals is an important lesson that can be gained from the experience of TCS. This learning can also be brought to black schools that are still struggling for the resources and skills required to implement the arts and culture units that are a relatively new addition in their curriculum.

From the spirit displayed by those TCS participants who initiated a community theatre project with such important survival qualities and future impacts, the inference may reasonably be drawn that TCS represented Nyerere's (1968) 'self-reliance' and the Black Consciousness Movement's 'self-determination' (Lochner, 2011). Self-reliance and self-determination as demonstrated in this study underpin the need for a funding model that strikes a delicate balance between instigating and providing support to projects from the outside while encouraging them to be resourceful and make the best use of what they have.

The learning methodology of TCS never stipulated any timeframe as to when participants might learn and graduate – participants were allowed to continue to participate up to a point they felt confident enough to branch out into a professional world. It took Maphalala for instance, more than eight years of participation at TCS before she could venture out. Prolonged participation could have also underpinned the fact that participants were lured

away from possible street loitering, and that employment opportunities were created at TCS. Furthermore, TCS's flexible and inclusive approach allowed for those who could have been at a lower level talent-wise than others to catch up at their own pace, seeing that TCS was open for anyone to participate.

Those who seem to have started their own path from participating in community arts projects have also proven to invest voluntarily their knowledge to other arts aspirants in the community. They also tend to 'crossover' from the mainstream performance back to performance at the community arts level and thus let their experience brush off on the less experienced ones (Markusen et al., 2006). While Nkosi had already been qualified by the Market Lab as a professional actor, he cherishes the experience of having had his first working experience abroad through TCS, and that he got to 'brush shoulders with household names such as Jonas Gwangwa' in a same community-based production (pers. comm., 2012). Having advanced his training at the Market Lab and practiced professionally outside TCS, Nkosi, was at the same time, also sharing his experience with the less experienced TCS participants who were part of this project.

Over and above teaching its participants, TCS held annual merit award ceremonies where it recognised its outstanding participants. These were talent-based recognitions whereby participants were awarded on merit for demonstrating improved capabilities in a certain arts discipline. Xosa for example was awarded for his superior acting merits upon his first year of joining TCS. This instilled belief in Xosa that he was good enough, and encouraged him to work hard to make it as a professional actor. It is apparent that this practise of awarding participants had performance-enhancing effects on Xosa. However this study does not demonstrate as to whether other recipients of awards of TCS were motivated and encouraged to work hard in pursuing their talents. This therefore poses a question for future research: can the practise of recognising hard work and exceptional capabilities, through merit awards, be a motivating factor in professional development?

Penetrating the job market in the creative industries is not obvious. Haukka (2010) identifies networking as part of the things needed for creative workers to succeed in securing employment. For some of his TV productions, Nkosi would employ some of former TCS participants on the basis that he knows and can trust them. To his current job, Xosa was

referred by a former TCS participant. These cases provide an example of an existing network that has its roots in participating in a community arts project. This type of networking is of particular significance considering that it is representative of a usually 'excluded group' as opposed to those that Oakley describe as 'product of structural social inequalities of which, despite high levels of formal education, they are profoundly unconscious' (2006: 266). Thus participating at TCS has provided former participants with networking opportunities necessary to penetrate job markets.

It is established in this study that TCS was neither one of the RDP nor independent community arts centres. It was located in the further remote periphery of the arts, culture and heritage sector and therefore runs a risk of being miscounted by researchers. The work of Joseph Gaylard and Peter Stark – commissioned by the Department of Arts and Culture (DAC) in 2006 and resulted in a yet to be implemented National Policy Framework of the Development of Community Arts Centres and Programmes – has since redefined community arts beyond just the basis of Community Arts Centres infrastructures (Gaylard & Stark, 2009; DAC Annual Report 2009/10; 2010/11; 2011/12). It acknowledges the existence of community-based arts projects that operate informally in residential backyards, abandoned and active school buildings, and community structures such as churches and halls. In this way, the risk to miscalculate the further peripheral community arts projects such as TCS gets minimised. This paper therefore supports this proposed policy framework which is evidently positioned to contribute towards an increased comprehension of the fuller picture of community arts movement in South Africa. This should then encourage more penetrative research work that will expose the work of community arts projects such as that of TCS. The work of TCS has proven to have notable socio-economic benefits that are invaluable in a developing society such as ours.

This study has also built on the work of Markusen et al. in which they locate the contribution of community-based arts beyond just political and social benefits, but also identify the 'hidden economic dividends' of artists operating in the sector (2006: 59). Job opportunities and the export earnings created by TCS for its participants as revealed in this study define, to a large extent, these economic benefits, and further add to the case that community arts projects contribute to the creative economy. Overall, the findings of this study must, if for

nothing else, begin to argue for a more open outlook that does not undervalue the economic contribution of community arts projects at the expense of overemphasising its social benefits.

Generally in this study I have adopted a methodology derived from the existing research literature and extracted from my own experiences working as an oral history researcher in an earlier context. In addition, in this study I adapted the research method to atone for instances where sources were not as cooperative as initially envisaged. I established that alternating interviews with the emailing of the list of written questions to respondents was also effective in collecting useful data from the respondents who could not fulfil interview appointments. The fact that I was able to analyse, interpret and process data collected under these circumstances, into comprehensible findings, alludes to the value this method can have to other researchers.

I also highlight the challenge of making tangible the positive impact of community arts projects for the purpose of earning it the recognition for contributing to the society, and justify its demand for funding support to funding stakeholders who constantly 'want to see statistically supported effects of community arts' (Van Erven, n/d: 2). Van Erven argues that it is impractical to deliver such statistical data (ibid.). Kate Oakley draws attention to similar concerns as raised by Holden (2004) and Jowell (2004) that it can be challenging to work towards quantifying the creative input (2006: 256). While acknowledging the aforementioned concerns, this report is more concerned about the need to highlight the importance of documenting the experiences of beneficiaries of informal educational initiatives such as TCS and creating an archive that future scholars can use. I therefore argue that there is existence of positive impact in the community arts sector that justifies the demand for funding support of the sector. I am also making a contribution to broadening the "range of evaluative techniques [which] are necessary to capture the depth, as well as the breadth of the encounter between communities and the creative arts" (Newman, Curtis & Stephens 2003: 320).

Reference list

Ainslee, S. [no date]. The voice of the nation. Essay. [Online]. Available at http://www.billainslie.co.za/sophia%20essay.htm (retrieved 7 July 2012).

Annual Community Theatre Festival/Theatresports, c1995. Newspaper cutting. File 2006 28 7 4005,
NELM archive. Digital copy in possession of T. Mzaku.

Atkinson, P. & Coffey, A. 2004. 'Analysing documentary realities', in D. Silverman (ed.) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, pp. 56–75. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications.

Bille, T. 2008. Creativity at work: labour market and education for artists and creative industries – some descriptive studies from Denmark. Electronic paper. Copenhagen Business School: Creative Encounters Working Papers. [Online]. Available at http://openarchive.cbs.dk/bitstream/handle/10398/7750/Creative%20Encounters%20Working%20Papers%2017.pdf?sequence=1 (retrieved 29 March 2012).

Bridgstock, R. S. 2005. Australian artists, starving and wellnourished: what can we learn from the prototypical protean? *Australian Journal of Career Development* 14 (3): 40-48. [Online]. Available at http://eprints.qut.edu.au/1767/ (retrieved 17 May 2012).

Bridgstock, R. S. 2009. 'Follow your bliss' or 'show me the money'? Career orientations, career management competence and career success in Australian creative workers. Electronic paper. Australian Policy Online. Available at http://apo.org.au/node/14938 (retrieved 17 May 2012).

Business Case, 2010. Template. Version 1.0. City of Johannesburg. Word document in possession of T. Mzaku.

Caves, E. 2006. *Creative industries: contracts between arts and commerce*. London: Harvard University Press.

City of Johannesburg Metropolitan Municipality, [no date]. Joburg 2040: Growth and Development Strategy. Central Strategy Unit Office of the Executive Mayor.

Cooke, V. 1993. Proposal for funding for the best of the showcases to be held at the Market Theatre from August 23rd to September 4th 1993. Document addressed to Phillip Stein. File 2006 28 7 2009, NELM archive. Digital copy in possession of T. Mzaku.

Coplan, D. 2008. *In township tonight*: *South Africa's black city music And theatre*, 2nd Ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Cohen-Cruz, J. 2002. 'An Introduction to Community Arts and Activism'. [Online]. Available at http://ed621.weebly.com/uploads/3/2/6/7/3267407/an_introduction_to_community_art_and_activism_cohen_cruz.doc (retrieved 30 January 2013)

Cohen-Cruz, J. 2005. *Local Acts: community-based performance in the United States*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Comunian, R., Faggian, A. & Jewell, S. 2011. Winning and losing in the creative industries: an analyisis of creative graduates' career opportunities across creative disciplines. [Online]. Available at http://centaur.reading.ac.uk/24832/1/Cultural_Trends_Finalall.pdf (retrieved 2 July 2013).

Creative Industries Development Framework of Gauteng Provincial Government, 2005. Policy Document. Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation: Gauteng Provincial Government.

Cultural Industries Growth Strategy, 1998. Policy Document. [Online]. Available at www.saccd.org.za/objects/cigs_musicreport.doc (retrieved 12 December 2012).

Davies, M. M. & Mosdell, N. 2006. *Practical research methods for media and cultural studies: making people count*. Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh.

Emmison, M. 2004. 'The conceptualization and analysis of visual data', in D. Silverman (ed.) *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*, pp. 246–265. 2nd ed. London: Sage Publications.

Fiske, Edward, B. 1999. *The champions of change: the impact of the arts on learning*. Available at http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED435581.pdf (retrieved 24 May 2012).

Gasman, M. & Anderson-Thompkins, S. 2003. Renaissance on the Eastside: motivating inner-city youth through arts. Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk 8 (4): 429-450. [Online] Available at http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1207/S15327671ESPR0804 (retrieved 25 March 2012).

Gauteng Arts in Schools Strategy (2012-2014), 2012. Client Consultation Draft. Prepared by the Curriculum Development Project Trust. Word document in possession of T. Mzaku.

Gauteng Creative Mapping Project: Mapping the Creative Industries in Gauteng, 2008. Prepared by AMERU (WITS UNIVERSITY) and CAJ in collaboration with the British Council. Department of Sports, Arts, Culture and Recreation: Gauteng Provincial Government.

Gauteng Organisation of Community Arts and Culture Centres, 2012. Chairperson's Report for the Year Ended 31 March 2012. Word document in possession of T. Mzaku.

Gaylard, J. 2004. 'From the Culture of Bricks to the Bricks of Culture: Towards a Policy Framework for Arts and Culture Centres', in G. Falken (ed.) *Inheriting the Flame: New Writing on Community Arts in South Africa*, pp. 67–76. Cape Town: Arts and Media Access Centre.

Gaylard, J. & Stark, P. 2009. Policy Document for the Development of Community Arts Centres and Programmes: Final Client Consultation Draft. Pretoria: Department of Arts and Culture.

Hagg, G. 2002. 'Towards optimally functioning community arts centres in South Africa: Proposed Strategy for empowering community arts centres'. [Online]. Available at http://www.hsrc.ac.za/Research_Publication-3766.phtml (retrieved 11 March 2011).

Hagg, G. 2004. 'The New Wave: government arts and culture centres – reinforcements of liabilities', in G. Falken (ed.) *Inheriting the Flame: New Writing on Community Arts in South Africa*, pp. 53–66. Cape Town: Arts and Media Access Centre.

Hagg, G. 2010. 'The state and community arts centres in a society in transformation: The South African Case', in *International Journal of Cultural Studies* (13)2. [Online]. Available at http://www.sagepublications.com (retrieved 11 March 2011).

Hagg, G. and Selepe, C.S. 2002. Towards Optimally Functioning Community Arts Centres in South Africa. Research report for Department of Arts and Culture. Pretoria: Human Sciences Research Council, URL: http://www.hsrc.ac.za/Research_Publication-3765.phtml [Online]. Available at www.dac.gov.za/community%20Arts%20centres/.../AUDIT%20report%2020%20Aug.doc – (retrieved 10 March 2013)

Higgs, P., Cunningham, S. & Bhakshi, H. 2008. Beyond the creative industries: Mapping the creative industries in the United Kingdom [Online]. Available at http://www.cci.edu.au (retrieved 12 February 2012).

Haukka, S. 2010. From education to work in Australia's Creative Digital Industries: Comparing the opinions and practices of employers and aspiring creatives, in *60Sox Report* (2). [Online]. Available at http://www.cci.edu.au/sites/default/files/shaukka/60%20Sox%20Volume%202%20January%202010%20FINAL_0.pdf (retrieved 22 May 2012).

Holden, J. 2004. *Capturing Cultural Value: How culture has become a tool of government policy*. London: Demos.

ICAEW member, 2012. How to become an ECAEW chartered accounted...and enjoy a highly rewarding career with endless opportunities. [Online]. Available at http://careers.icaew.com/~/media/Files/Graduate%20brochure.ashx (retrieved 25 February 2013)

Joffe, A. & Newton, M. 2008. Creative Industries in South Africa. [Online]. Available at http://www.labour.co.za (retrieved 6 October 2011).

Korten, D. 2011. Agenda for a new economy. Inaugural Lecture. The Wayne Morse Center For Law And Politics 2011-2013 Inquiry. "From wall street to main street: capitalism and the common good". University Of Oregon. [Online]. Available at

http://livingeconomiesforum.org/sites/files/pdfs/Korten%20U%20of%20Oregon%20public%20lecture%20distribution%20version.pdf (retrieved 13 January 2013)

Kros, C. 2010. *Seeds of Separate Development: Origins of Bantu Education.* Pretoria: Unisa Press.

Leonard, T. 1982. *South African Politics.* Cape Town: D. Phillips.

Lochner, E. 2010. The Role of the Arts in Building Community and Artistic Development. Grahamstown: Rhodes University.

Lochner, E. 2011. The Democratisation of Art: CAP as an Alternative Art Space in South Africa. Dissertation. Grahamstown: Rhodes University.

Mad Buddies, 2012. Feature Film. Directed by G Hofmeyr. South Africa: Walt Disney Company.

Market Theatre Foundation, The, (n.d.). Best of the laboratory showcases – Laager 23rd August to 4th September. Document. File 2003 92 1 10001, NELM archive.

Mattaraso, F. 1997. Use Or Ornament? The social impact of participation in the arts. Available at http://www.culturenet.cz/res/data/004/000571.pdf (retrieved 22 May 2012).

Markusen A., Gilmore, S., Johnson, A., Levi, T. & Martinez, A. 2006. Crossover: How Artists Build Careers across Commercial, Nonprofit and Community work. Available at http://www.hhh.umn.edu/projects/prie (retrieved 24 May 2012).

Markusen, A. & King, D. 2003. Artistic Dividend: The Arts' Hidden Contributions to Regional Development. Available at http://www.hhh.umn.edu/img/assets/6158/artistic_dividend.pdf (retrieved 24 May 2012).

Marschall, S. 2002. *Community mural art in South Africa.* Pretoria: University of South Africa.

Mayase, S. T. 2008. My gun, my enemy and my family. Word document in possession of T. Mzaku.

Maziya, Z. 2012. Another Level Conference a success. Newspaper article. Available at http://www.times.co.sz/print/77156.html (retrieved 30 December 2012).

Mbhele, N.F. & Ntuli, D.B.Z., c1991. *Ishashalazi.* Pietermaritzburg: Reach Out.

McCarthy, K.F., Brooks, A., Lowell, J., Zakaras, L. 2001. The Performing Arts in a New Era. [Online] Available at www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/2007/MR1367.pdf (retrieved 11 November 2012). RAND URL: http://www.rand.org/

Mehra, B. 2002. Bias in Qualitative Research: Voices from an Online Classroom, in The Qualitative Report, (7)1. Available at http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR7 1/mehra.html (retrieved 16 June 2012).

Miles, E. 2004. *Polly Street: the story of an arts centre*. Johannesburg: Ampersand Foundation.

Miracle Theatre and Thesele Creative Society at Ipelegeng, The, 2005. Business Plan 2006/2008, with financial projections. Prepared by Brian Debnam Ltd. Word document in possession of T. Mzaku.

Mokwena, S. 1991. The era of the jackrollers: contextualising the rise of the youth gangs in Soweto. Paper presented at the Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation, Seminar No. 7: 30 October 1991. [Online] Available at http://www.csvr.org.za/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=1805%3Athe-era-of-the-jackrollers-contextualising-the-rise-of-the-youth-gangs-in-soweto&Itemid=2 (retrieved 10 February 2013)

Murray, S. & Keefe, J., 2007. *Physical Theatres: a critical introduction*. London: Routledge.

Mzansi's Golden Economy: Contribution of the Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector to the New Growth Path [no date]. Conference Discussion Document. Department of Arts and Culture. Available at www.dac.gov.za/.../Conference%20Report%20-%20final.pdf (retrieved 25 February 2013)

New Growth Path: The Framework, The [no date]. Policy Document. Available at www.info.gov.za/view/DownloadFileAction?id=135748 (retrieved 25 February 2013)

Newman, T. et al, 2003. Do community-based arts projects result in social gains? A review of the literature. [Online] Available at http://cdj.oxfordjournals.org/ at University of Witwatersrand (retrieved 2 March 2013)

Nyerere, J. K., 1968. *Ujamaa: Essays on socialism*. London: Oxford University Press.

O'Leary, Zina. 2005. *The Essential Guide to Doing Research*. London: Sage Publications.

Oakley, K. 2006. 'Include Us Out—Economic Development and Social Policy in The Creative Industries'*, in Cultural Trends, (15)4,* 255-273. London: Routledge.

Orkin, M. 1991. *Drama and the South African state*. Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press.

Patton, M. Q. 2002. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*, 3rd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Payters, L. 2000. 'Great Cast Line-up for Ngema's The Zulu!'. Press Release. Available at http://www.artlink.co.za/news_article.htm?contentID=13879 (retrieved 1 August 2012).

Pressley, D. 2011. Vavi: SA faces "ticking time bomb". *Business Day*, March 2, 2011. [Online]. Available at http://www.iol.co.za/business/business-news/vavi-sa-faces-ticking-time-bomb-1.1035095#.UTV_bXyMHbo (retrieved 5 March 2013).

Quarterly Labour Force Survey, 2013. Research Report. [Online]. Available at http://www.statssa.gov.za/publications/P0211/P02111stQuarter2013.pdf (retrieved 27 August 2013).

Richter, M. 2003. 'Traditional Medicines and Traditional Healers in South Africa'. Discussion paper prepared for the Treatment Action Campaign and AIDS Law Project. [Online]. Available at http://www.tac.org.za/Documents/ResearchPapers/Traditional_Medicine_briefing.pdf (retrieved 20 February 2013).

Schein, E. H. 1990. 'Career Anchors and Role/ Job Planning: The Links Between Career Pathing and Career Development'. [Online]. MIT Sloan School of Management Working Paper No. 3192-90-BPS. Available at http://dspace.mit.edu/bitstream/handle/1721.1/2315/SWP-3192-22603401.pdf (retrieved 14 April 2012).

Scripp, L. 2000. 'Introduction: The Premise of Learning through Music' in Journal for Learning Through Music/ Summer 2000. [Online]. Available at http://music-in-education.org/articles/The_Premise_of_Learning_Through_Music.pdf (retrieved on 14 April 2012).

Seleka, M., Howe, G., Cele, J., Maledu, T. & Zwane, L. 2004. *Voices of Inspiration*. Scottsdale: G-Force Publishing.

Sewpaul, N. 2004. 'Community Arts as Political Protest Post 76 - some thoughts', in G. Falken (ed.) *Inheriting the Flame: New Writing on Community Arts in South Africa*, pp. 31–41. Cape Town: Arts and Media Access Centre.

Sichel, A. 2012. Soweto Theatre is born. Tonight. May, 23 2012. [Online]. Available at http://www.iol.co.za/tonight/news/local/soweto-theatre-is-born-1.1302605 (retrieved 28 February 2013)

Sichel, A 2013. then and now...those were the days. Tonight. February, 05 2013. [Online]. Available at http://www.iol.co.za/tonight/what-s-on/gauteng/then-and-now-those-were-days-1.1464382 (retrieved 28 February 2013)

Solberg, R. 1999. *Alternative theatre in South Africa: talks with prime movers since the 1970s*. Pietermaritzburg: University of Kwazulu-Natal Press.

Steinberg, C. 1993. *Towards the Transformation of the Performing Arts Council of the Transvaal*, Johannesburg: Wits Cullen Reference Library.

Tsotsi, 2005. Feature Film. Directed by G. Wood. South Africa: Ster-Kinekor Pictures.

Van Erven, E. 2001. *Community Theatre: Global Perspective*. London: Routledge.

Van Erven, E. [no date]. 'In Search of the Essence'. Unpublished Paper. Presented at the Arts and Culture Projects of Theater Instituut Nederland Music Centre The Netherlands Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs Expert Meeting in Johannesburg: 21-23 November 2010.

Van Robbroeck, L. 1991. 'The Ideology and Practice of Community Arts in South Africa, with Particular Reference to Katlehong and Alexandra Arts Centres'. Dissertation. Johannesburg: University of the Witwatersrand.

Van Robbroeck, L. 2004. 'Community Arts in South Africa: A Brief History', in G. Falken (ed.) Inheriting the Flame: New Writing on Community Arts in South Africa, pp. 41–51. Cape Town: Arts and Media Access Centre.

Weber, S. 2008. 'Visual Images in Research', in J. Gary Knowles & Ardra L. Cole (ed.) *Handbook of the Arts in Qualitative Research*, pp. 41–54. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Webster, E. & Von Holdt, K. 2005. *Beyond the apartheid workplace. Studies in transition*. Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal Press.

Weitz, J. 1996. 'Coming up Taller: Arts and Humanities Programs for Children and Youth At Risk'. Available at http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED410353.pdf (retrieved 24 December 2012).

Welsh, D. 2010. *The Rise and Fall of Apartheid*. Cape Town: Jonathan Ball Publishers.

White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage, 1996. Policy Document. [Online]. www.dac.gov.za (retrieved 11March 2011)

Wits School of Arts. 2010. 'William Shakespeare's Othello'. Press Release. Available at http://www.artlink.co.za/news_article.htm?contentID=24290 (retrieved 01 February 2013).

Worden, L. 2011. *The Making of Modern South Africa: Conquest, Apartheid, Democracy*. 4th ed. Oxford: Wiley-Backwell.

Wright, R., John, L., Offord, D.R., Duku, E., Rowe, W. & Ellenbogen, S. 2006. 'Community-based arts program for youth in low-income communities: a multi-method evaluation', in *Child and adolescent social work journal*, (23)5-5, 635-652. [Online] Available at http://portal.unesco.org/culture/fr/files/28931/11291290811Robin_Wright.pdf/Robin%2BWright.pdf

Websites

Author Unknown, [no date]. Medical doctor/ general practitioner. www.mysacareerguide.com.]. Available at http://www.mysacareerguide.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=123&Itemid=250 (Last accessed 29 July 2013).

Author Unknown, [no date]. About Drama for Life: www.dramaforlife.co.za (last accessed: 30 July 2013).

Williams, C., 2013. Mission. www.stepafrika.org. Available at http://www.stepafrika.org/company/mission/(last accessed: 30 July 2013)

Personal communication

Cooke Vanessa, 2012. Interviewed by Mzaku T. 9 December 2012. Braamfontein, Johannesburg.

Dladla Jabulani, 2012. Interviewed by Mzaku T. 18 November 2012. Soweto, Johannesburg.

Maphalala Miriam Vangile, 2012. Interviewed by Mzaku T. 4 October 2012. Soweto, Johannesburg.

Marishane Michael, 2012. Interviewed by Mzaku T. by email. 30 November 2012.

Motselane J. T. 2012. Interviewed by Mzaku T. by email. 29 December 2012.

Nkosi Kenneth Mncedisi, 2012. Interviewed by Mzaku T. 18 October 2012. Soweto, Johannesburg.

Ntsoko Tshepiso, 2012. Interviewed by Mzaku T. 12 October 2012. Soweto, Johannesburg.

Xosa Innocent Mandla, 2012. Interviewed by Mzaku T. 30 November 2012. Soweto, Johannesburg.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1:

Interview Questions (main participants)

1. Tell me about yourself.
2. Briefly describe TCS.
3. Do you know how was it established?
4. When did you join TCS?
5. Where did you reside at the time of joining TCS?
6. How did you join TCS?
7. What made you join TCS?
8. Was there any other community theatre project in your neighbourhood that was similar to TCS?
9. How do you think you would have spent your time if TCS or any other community arts project did not exist in your area and why?
10. Describe the crime situation in your area at the time of joining TCS.
11. Where did you attend your high school?
12. Was your high school a public, former model-c or private school?
13. Were theatre related subjects taught in your school?
14. Did you consider yourself talented in the field of performing arts before joining TCS?
15. What did you learn while at TCS?
16. How were skills transferred at TCS?
17. Do you think you would have had the opportunity to learn these skills elsewhere?
18. How did you receive the teaching methods used at TCS?
19. Do you think the methods used at TCS to teach you could have worked with any other person?
20. If there was anything you would change about TCS's teaching methods, what could it be?
21. What kind of work did you do at TCS?
22. Where you ever remunerated for the work you did at TCS?
23. When did you leave TCS and why?
24. What did you want to become when you grew up and why?
25. Did you do follow your childhood career choice and why?
26. What was your first job after you left TCS?
27. What is your current occupation?
28. How did you end up doing your current job?
29. What keeps you in your current job?
30. Are any of the skills learnt at TCS helpful to your current professional environment in any way? Please explain.

31. a. What is your attitude towards your job?
    b. How did you develop this attitude?
32. a. Explain the kind of challenges you face in your current job.

    b. How do you deal with these challenges?

33. Would you consider changing you career in the future?
34. What would you say are your best attributes for your profession?
35. Are you successful in your career and why?
36. Do you volunteer your time to any charity events or organisations and why?
37. Is there anything that you would like to tell me

I would also like to interview your previous or current supervisor. Who could that be?

Appendix 2:

Written answers to interview questions [unedited]

Submitted via email by Moletsane, T.J. on 28 December 2012

1. Tell me about yourself.
   Tlalane Moletsane, very conservativeand professional. I grew up in Soweto , white city jabavu , I have 3 slibings , 2 sisters and 1 brother, I have a 10 year old son, who is grade 4.
2. Briefly describe TCS.
   TCS was a student's social club based in Soweto , between two townships , white city and Molapo , our rehearsals were at Thesele secondary school. TCS was for students at Thesele Secondary school when it started but later other students from other schools were welcomed.

3. Do you know how was it established?
It was started by Mr. Ziqubu who was a teacher at Thesele secondary school, one of his reasons to start this movement was that students did nt have much to do , and boredom led to students engaging in sex and end up with unwanted pregnancies.

4. When did you join TCS?
In 1994

5. Where did you reside at the time of joining TCS?
Soweto white City Jabavu

6. How did you join TCS?

7. *A friend of mine invited me and I went there several times and that's when I decided to join.*

8. What made you join TCS? **I was bored and I did not have much to do , at the time I was still trying to find myself.**

9. Was there any other community theatre project in your neighbourhood that was similar to TCS?

10. I think at Morris Isaacson they had the same community project , but I don't remember

11. How do you think you would have spent your time if TCS or any other community arts project did not exist in your area and why?

Honestly , I don't know , maybe I could have had lots and lots of babies , because the was not much to do at the time.

12. Describe the crime situation in your area at the time of joining TCS.

Crime was very high at that time and escalating every day , people were killing each other , students were raped , I think poverty and unemployment led to this.

13. Where did you attend your high school?
Thesele Secondary School , White city Jabavu Soweto

14. Was your high school a public, former model-c or private school?

It was a public school , very disadvantaged,

15. Were theatre related subjects taught in your school?
No not all

16. Did you consider yourself talented in the field of performing arts before joining TCS?

I think so , yes , I loved dancing and again a good actress

17. What did you learn while at TCS?

One thing I learned , maybe I appreciated with TCS ,is learning to deal with people and independence.

18. How were skills transferred at TCS?

everyone was given an opportunity to do something at the time , we were given different roles to do , I was a personal assistant at the time , we had directors and so on , so we were working closely with this directors and I learned a lot from this leaders , they shared their innovative ideas with us

19. Do you think you would have had the opportunity to learn these skills elsewhere?
Maybe, maybe not.i don't know.

20. How did you receive the teaching methods used at TCS?

it was bad , the was a staff shortage at the time , so we all did what needed to be done .

21. Do you think the methods used at TCS to teach you could have worked with any other person?

I think as people we need to make certain choices in life , one of the choices for me was to make sure I achieve , be a better person with the little I had , as difficult as it was , I have made it ,I was able to handle all the pressures of life , I didn't give up and some of my friend gave up on life.

22. If there was anything you would change about TCS's teaching methods, what could it be? ***Yes I look at my son right now , he is getting the best education one can give a child and I have realized that in public schools method of teaching is still disadvantaging our learners ,the is not much that has changed, still no proper structure, no resources, no involvement of students and parents, I think method of teaching should heavily rely upon introducing learners to method of model performance ,where learners should see their performance and match it, this will help them learn faster and not only that, learners should be a part of decision making when comes to their education , parents should also be involved , creative societies should be encouraged at public schools, and creative societies should be a part of curriculum from grade 7 .***

23. What kind of work did you do at TCS?

I was a personal assistant

24. Where you ever remunerated for the work you did at TCS?

No not at all

25. When did you leave TCS and why?

I had to make a living and I decided to go look for a job.

26. What did you want to become when you grew up and why?

A lawyer, I grew up watching law and order, it was fascinating for me to see how lawyers can manipulate the system to their advantage.

27. Did you follow your childhood career choice and why***?***

No I did not , I come from a disadvantaged background and I didn't have money to pay for my studies , I did not pursue my dream

28. What was your first job after you left TCS?

a cash controller for PG AUTOGLASS.

29. How can you describe your current career?

I just started a new job this month, but my previous job I managed 22 staff in regional offices, very hectic and demanding job , and I needed a change, I am now a compliance officer , no staff reporting to me, my role is more of auditing , making sure employees are in compliance with the rules and regulations of the company , that company's policies and procedures are being followed, and that behavior in the organization meets the company's standards of Conduct.

30. What is your current occupation?

Compliance Officer.

31. How did you end up doing your current job? ***I get bored very quickly, always want to try new things , so now and again I will check if the is something interesting and that pays well that I can do , and will just go for it.***
32. What keeps you in your current job?

    The job I have started now its very excited , its like you are a "police man for the company , and you can make or break the company with the recommendations that you bring to the business.
33. Do you do anything else other than the job you have described?
    Yes I have a small business , monakaladi .
34. Are any of the skills learnt at TCS helpful to your current professional environment in any way? Please explain. ***I think we have already discussed that , yes leadership skills.***
35. After leaving TCS, have you worked professionally with anyone with whom you participated at TCS? ***No***
36. Have you ever worked professionally with anyone who participated in the community arts projects? *No*
37. a. What is your attitude towards your job? ***I love it , compliance officers are in demand right now., especially in the banking sector.***

    b. How did you develop this attitude?

I am self-motivator , don't let anything stand in my way

a. Explain the kind of challenges you face in your current job. ***negativity and people who judgment , that I cannot tolerate, such attitude makes people in different directions and find fault in everything.***

b. How do you deal with these challenges? ***I focus on what I need to do***

38. Would you consider changing you career in the future? ***Yes , I want to do forensic psychology, that's what I am studying now***
39. What would you say are your best attributes for your profession? ***Integrity , can do attitude, , innovative and professionalism I think that is what makes me***
40. Are you successful in your career and why? *Yes I am., career wise I have grown and I am still going to grow .*
41. Do you volunteer your time to any charity events or organisations and why***? Sometimes , MTN looks after few charity organisations and I do participate.***
42. Is there anything that you would like to tell me. ***Well talking about you now , I can see that you have done so much for yourself irrespective of where you come from , congratulations.***
43. I would also like to interview your previous or current supervisor. Who could that be? ***No my manager was dismissed and I am reporting directly to a GM and I wouldn't like to get him involved – you are now asking for too much.***

44. Do you have any document (text or picture) that depicts your career? Please provide copies, if any. ***No***
45. Do you have any document (text or picture) that depicts your involvement at TCS? Please provide copies, if any. *No I don't have*

Appendix 3:

Questions for employers

1. **Please state the name of the organisation in which you work with Ms/Mr?**

2. **What is your role in this organisation?**

3. **What is Ms/Mr…'s role/ job description?**

4. **Describe Ms/Mr…'s distinct skills that make her/him work well.**

5. **Describe the work ethics of Ms/Mr…**

6. **Do you think Ms/Mr… is able to learn and use any new skills?**

7. **What do you know about Ms/Mr…'s current activities? For example, do you know whether she/he volunteers her/his time to any charity events or organisations?**

   .

8. **What else can you tell me about Ms/Mr…?**

Thank you for taking time to answer my questions.

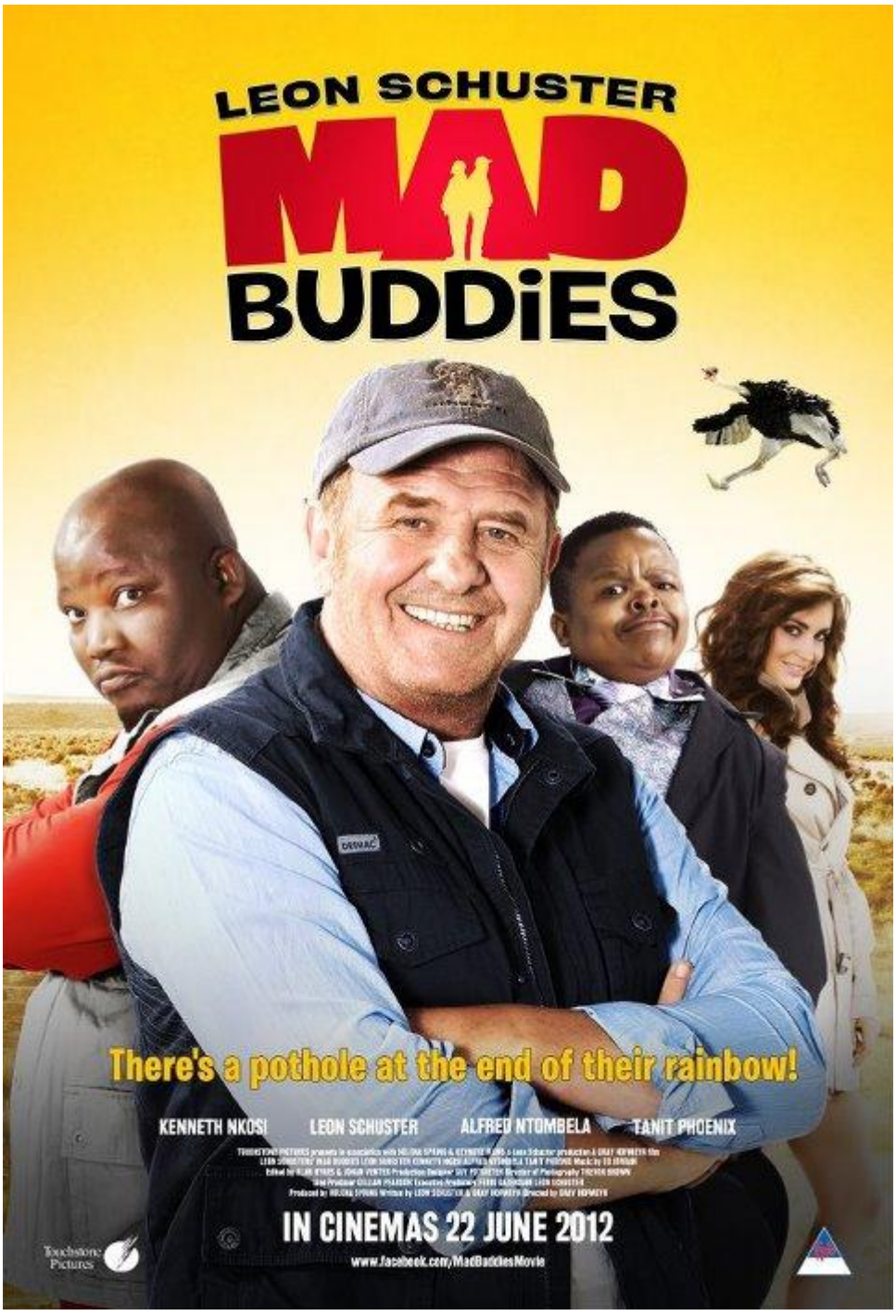
Appendix 4:

Interview Questions (TCS leader)

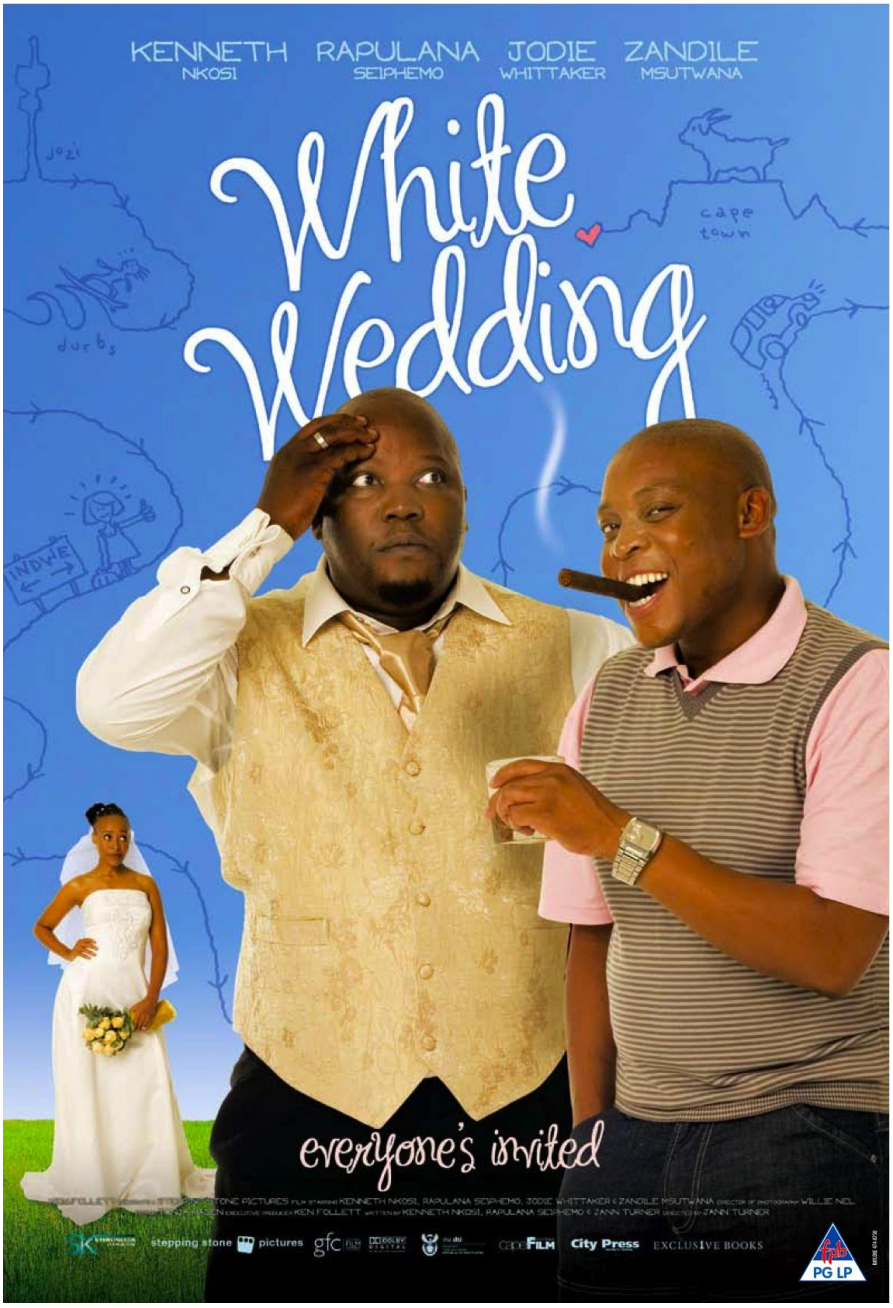
38. Tell me about yourself.
39. Describe TCS.
40. a. When was TCS established?
    b. How was it established?
    c. Why was it established?
41. What do you think was the role of TCS in the community?
42. What was your role at TCS?
43. a. When did you become involved with TCS?
    b. How did you become involved with TCS?
44. Was there any other similar community theatre project in the same neighbourhood as TCS?
45. How do you think TCS was different from other Soweto-based community arts projects, you know of, that existed between 1990 and 1995?
46. Describe the crime situation in the neighbourhood between 1990 and 1995.
47. Were theatre related subjects taught in Thesele School between 1990 and 1995?
48. What did TCS teach its participants?
49. How were skills transferred at TCS?
50. How do you think the skills transferred at TCS were useful? Please explain.
51. a. What were the teaching methods used at TCS?
    b. Did the teaching methods used work for all the participants?
    c. How did you make sure that these methods worked for all participants?
52. If there was anything you would change about TCS's teaching methods, what would it be?
53. What kind of jobs did TCS offer to its participants and why?
54. a. Did TCS ever remunerate its participants for the work they did?
    b. How were participants remunerated?
55. a. How can you describe the following TCS participants?
        - Kenneth Nkosi
        - Jeanette Tlalane Moletsane
        - Innocent Mandla Xosa
        - Vangile Mirriam Maphalala
        - Tshepiso Windy Ntsoko
    b. What was the strength of each participant you described above?
    c. Are you informed of the careers of these participants?
56. Do you know if any of these participants volunteer their time to any charity events or organisations?

57. What else can you tell me about TCS or any of the participants we have just discussed?

Appendix 5:


LEON SCHUSTER
MAD
BUDDIES
There's a pothole at the end of their rainbow!
KENNETH NKOSI
LEON SCHUSTER
ALFRED NTOMBELA
TANIT PHOENIX
IN CINEMAS 22 JUNE 2012
www.facebook.com/MadBuddiesMovie
Touchstone Pictures

Appendix 6:


KENNETH NKOSI
RAPULANA SEIPHEMO
JODIE WHITTAKER
ZANDILE MSUTWANA
White Wedding
everyone's invited
stepping stone pictures
City Press
EXCLUSIVE BOOKS
PG LP

Appendix 7:

[Find attached in a separate pdf format]

Appendix 8:

[Find attached in a separate pdf format]

Appendix 9:

Written answers to interview questions for Maphalala's previous supervisor [Unedited]

Written and sent via email by Marishane, Michael on 30 November 2012

In partial fulfilment of the Master of Arts degree at the University of the Witwatersrand, I am conducting a study to examine the influence of community arts in the career of Ms Miriam Vangile 'Sisi' Maphalala. As the previous work supervisor of Ms Maphalala, I hereby request you to answer the following questions about her.

Please state the name of the organisation/ project in which you worked with Ms Maphalala? Rise of The Nation Project

What was your role in this organisation/ project? Director

What was Ms Maphalala's role/ job description? Artist (Actress, vocalists and dancer / and assisted music director / conductor

Why did you consider Ms Maphalala for the role you have described above despite her lack of a formal qualification (e.g. Diploma or Degree)? Her degree of professionalism and talent she posses

Describe Ms Maphalala's distinct skills that made her work well.: As an artist she is always ready to give, especially in music and as an actress, she was nominated as one of the promising actress in one of our festival performances. Where we won an two awards. More over she is very influential in a very positive way to her colleague and she easily get along with everyone.

Describe the work ethics of Ms Maphalala.: She is a very disciplined individual who has an ear to hear the profound content of sound especially in harmonizing and putting music together and its arrangement. Her moral attitude and love towards music develops her to the level of excellent vocalist and musician.

Do you think Ms Maphalala was able to learn and use any new skills? With this she is gifted, as a good listener, she can be able to adapt to any creative situation. She moved from the stepping stone semi professionalism, and has an ability to learn more

things.

What do you know about Ms Maphalala's current activities? For example, do you know whether she volunteers her time to any charity events or organisations? She currently works with Themba Inteactive in Braamfontein as an artist and peer educator through creative arts.

What else can you tell me about Ms Maphalala? She is a very humble individual who has immeasurable talent that can be rooted and used to enhance her career in the arts as well as to construct her life. She has love for the arts and dedicated

Thank you for taking time to answer my questions.