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THE STATE OF PROFESSIONAL DRAMA IN THE FREE STATE

An investigation into professional drama
more than 10 years post re-structuring of the
Free State Performing Arts Council (PACOFS)



by

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DISSERTATION

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Declaration

“ I hereby declare that the dissertation submitted here for the degree Magister Artium (Drama and Theatre Arts) at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and has never been submitted to another university / faculty.

Right of authorship of this work is hereby ceded to the University of the Free State.”



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Abstract

The Drama Department of the Performing Arts Council of the Free State (PACOFS) represented, for many years, the Professional Drama Company in the Free State. This department was closed down on the 30th of March 1997 as part of the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa in accordance with the stipulations of the White Paper on Arts and Culture of 1996. The major reason for the necessity of this restructuring was the public and government perception of the resident companies within Performing Arts Councils being predominantly white, and being concerned with predominantly Euro-centric productions to the exclusion of other cultural and artistic groups in South Africa. The White Paper proposed a dismantling of resident companies in favour of individual artists and companies applying to a National Arts Council for funding for projects and performing arts initiatives (including funding for private Drama Companies as institutions), then approaching the Performing Arts Councils for assistance with the staging of these projects, where the Performing Arts Council's role would be one of facilitating projects rather than producing them itself - as had been the case with the old Performing Arts Councils.

The aim was for the Performing Arts Council to be more accessible to a wider base of artists and in so doing allow for a greater diversity of work to be produced and subsequently staged through the Performing Arts Council's facilitation of this work.

This study investigates primarily what has happened in terms of Drama Companies in Bloemfontein (as representative of Free State trends) and compares them in nature and works undertaken to the former PACOFS Drama. The study attempts to provide a modest contribution to the activities of Professional Drama Companies in the Free State after dismantling of the Performing Arts Council resident Drama Company and proposes to render insights and recommendations for the future sustainability of Drama Companies as regards their current and future functions, activities and existence.

Findings pertain to activities of Free State artists more than ten years after closure of the PACOFS Drama Department and provide insights into the accessibility of new funding structures and the Performing Arts Council to these artists. Qualitative findings pertaining to perceptions on the part of professionals, students and companies involved in the Free State Drama industry regarding Arts transformation render insights for possible change and redression.

*Professional Drama in the Free State
more than 10 years after restructuring of PACOFS.*

The following findings emerge :

Drama productions continue to be staged by private companies in the Free State who make use of both local and outside professional artists as required by the production.

Funding for these projects is secured from the National Arts Council, but to a lesser degree than other private and corporate sources or from the National Lottery.

White Paper stipulations for transformation of PACOFS were followed and mandates seem to have been adhered to, but the greater accessibility of the facilities and services of the Playhouse is not perceived by artists as having had a beneficial effect on Free State Drama.

The development of Arts festivals, most notably Volksblad Kunstefees, has become the most viable platform for presenting local work, and artists' only involvement with PACOFS is the extent to which PACOFS services and facilities are utilized by the festivals.

Perceptions on the part of role-players in Free State Drama is that generally a redression of existing structures and Arts policy is required.

Abstrak

Die Toneelafdeling van die Uitvoerende-kunsteraad van die Vrystaat (PACOFS/SUKOVS), is vanaf die inhuldiging van die Kunsterade in Suid Afrika die tuiste van professionele of sogenamde beroepstoneel. As sulks was die vaste toneelgeselskappe verbonde aan dié rade as die land se vernaamste verhoogkunstenaars beskou. Hierdie afdeling is op 30 Maart 1997 gesluit as deel van die herstrukturering van die Uitvoerende-kunsterade in Suid Afrika, ooreenkomstig die bepalinge van die Witskrif op Kuns en Kultuur van 1996.

Die hoofrede vir die noodsaaklikheid van hierdie herstrukturering was die publieke- en regerings persepsie van die vaste geselskappe binne die Kunsterade, as hoofsaaklik wit en met eurosentriese produksies bemoeid met die uitsluiting van ander kulturele- en artistieke groepe in Suid- Afrika.

Die Witskrif op Kuns en Kultuur stel 'n ontbinding van dié geselskappe voor, ten gunste van die individuele kunstenaars en geselskappe wat dan by die Nasionale Kunsteraad aansoek om befondsing moet rig. Hierna nader die kunstenaar die Nasionale Kunsteraad en word die rol van die Streekskunsteraad ondersteunend van aard, met die verskaffing van dienste, tegniese benodighede en bystand by die aanbied van die kunstenaar/geselskap se produksie. Die rol is dan in teenstelling met die vorige produksiehuisrol wat die Uitvoerende-kunsterade vervul het.

Die regering se doel hiermee was vir die Streekuitvoerende-kunsteraad om meer toeganklik te wees vir 'n groter en meer verteenwoordigende basis van kunstenaars en om sodoende 'n wyer verskeidenheid werk aan te bied, deur die Kunsteraad se fasilitering in plaas van sy eie uitsluitlike aanbieding daarvan.

Die studie ondersoek primêr die verskynsel van onafhanklike toneelgeselskappe in Bloemfontein (as verteenwoordigend van 'n Vrystaatse tendens) en vergelyk die bedrywighede van dié geselskappe met die voormalige SUKOVS Toneelgeselskap.

Die studie poog om 'n beskeie bydrae te lewer ten opsigte van bedrywighede van Professionele Toneelgeselskappe in die Vrystaat na die ontbinding van die SUKOVS vastetoneelgeselskap en poog om insigte en aanbevelings vir die toekomstige lewensvatbaarheid van toneelgeselskappe in die Vrystaat te verskaf. Huidige en toekomstige funksie, bedrywighede en bestaan aan die hand van professionele opinie op dié gebied word beskryf.

Bevindinge uit hierdie studie het betrekking op die aktiwiteite van toneelspelers in die Vrystaat meer as tien jaar na die sluiting van die SUKOVS Toneelafdeling en poog om insig te verskaf ten opsigte van die toeganklikheid van nuwe strukture vir befondsing asook toeganklikheid van die Uitvoerendekunsteraad vir kunstenaars. Kwalitatiewe bevindinge het betrekking op die persepsies van professionele toneelspelers, drama studente en toneelgeselskappe as rolspelers in die Vrystaat Toneelindustrie en poog om insigte te verskaf ten opsigte van Kunstetransformasie in die provinsie asook moontlike aanbevelings vir verandering.

Die volgende bevindinge kan uitgesonder word :

Toneelproduksies word steeds deur onafhanklike toneelgeselskappe in die Vrystaat aangebied en daar word van plaaslike en buite kunstenaars gebruik gemaak soos deur die produksie verlang.

Befondsing vir hierdie projekte word tot 'n mindere mate vanaf die Nasionale Kunsteraad verkry, maar eerder vanaf private en korporatiewe bronne en die Nasionale Lotery.

Witskrif bepalinge vir transformasie van PACOFS is gevolg en dit blyk dat daar by mandate gehou word, maar dat die toeganklikheid van fasiliteite en dienste nie volgens kunstenaars 'n voordelige effek op Vrystaat Toneel gehad het nie.

Die ontwikkeling van Kunstefeeste, hoofsaaklik Volksblad Kunstefees, het die platform van keuse vir kunstenaars vir die aanbieding van hulle werk geword, waar betrokkenheid by PACOFS beperk is tot die PACOFS fasiliteite en dienste wat deur die kunstefees gebruik word.

Rolspelers in Vrystaat Toneel is van mening dat daar 'n algehele transformasie van strukture en kunstebelid moet plaasvind.

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1. Introduction and Thesis Statement

The purpose of this dissertation will be to provide an introductory perspective on the question as to whether or not the restructuring of the Performing Arts Council in the Free State has had a beneficial effect on professional drama in the Province. Since the Performing Arts Council is based in the Free State Capital City, Bloemfontein, Performing Arts in Bloemfontein are examined since Bloemfontein based Private Companies are the most likely to be affected by the closure of the Performing Arts Council Resident Company. Since the larger and better structured Drama Companies exist inside Bloemfontein, the paper proposes to render findings as a Provincial trend rather than an actual representation of activity within the province of the Free State. The paper will seek to define the role of PACOFS in professional theatre pre-restructuring and to examine how this role has changed post-restructuring and what effect this has had on role players in Professional Free State Drama. This implies an examination of pre- and post restructuring mandates and the respective effects of these mandates on role-players as well as PACOFS compliance with these mandates.

A questionnaire regarding the perceptions of (and realities) facing role-players in the current drama industry in the Free State and their specific specialist views, opinions and perceptions of the role of the Regional Performing Arts Council (PACOFS) propose to render the research relevant and provides scholarly contribution to both academic and artistic disciplines. Such an investigation of, specifically PACOFS, has not yet been undertaken and this research aims to extend the existing knowledge of the history, objectives, functioning, structuring and role of PACOFS in Free State drama from the point of view of role- players, with specific reference to the perceived changes post-restructuring, thereby filling that particular hiatus in existing knowledge. The hypothesis is that more work was produced within the resident company structure of the old PACOFS than is currently being facilitated by PACOFS, and that more artists and other role-players in Free State drama were involved in drama in the province than those involved currently.

The focus is on drama and not ballet, opera, music or other genres. The hypothesis may be extended to include the necessity for subsidized, national theatre with resident companies of actors as more effective in producing a broader base of work than the current project funded artistic programs hosted by the NAC / PACOFS.

Professional Drama in the Free State

The establishment, brief historical overview and general aims of the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa are firstly discussed and their development and growth is traced. A description of the rationale for the funding structures is provided and compared to the present funding structures of PACOFS as well as structures for artists to access funding for drama projects. The political climate surrounding their restructuring is examined and the restructuring is described. Some perceptions on the part of artists from a questionnaire are analyzed to provide some qualitative views on the subject of professional drama in the province.

Productions by PACOFS Resident Drama Company and current companies based in Bloemfontein are compared to gain a sense of the number and nature of productions prior to restructuring and those undertaken currently. This focus is aimed at providing a qualitative sense of work currently undertaken and compare it to similar productions undertaken prior to the closure of the PACOFS Drama Department. The paper does not propose to compare the nature of the Drama work undertaken (ie. Euro-centric productions versus African productions), but rather to examine the extent of previously disadvantaged local artist's involvement in drama work of any nature or genre. The desire on the part of artists to belong to a resident company (as was the case with the previous Performing Arts Councils) is examined and problems facing artists as regards establishing companies or accessing existing structures is examined.

The larger, more structured and better managed Drama Companies in the Free State (more specifically in Bloemfontein) currently are examined – work is compared in simplistic quantitative terms to work undertaken under the Resident PACOFS Drama Company, and problems facing their access to current corporate and governmental structures for funding are examined.

Role-players in management and maintenance (experts in the field), of existing Drama Companies provide insights and recommendations in providing for perceptions regarding a better sustainable way forward for professional Drama in the Free State.

2. The Performing Arts Councils in South Africa

“In 1962 the NTO was replaced by four regionally based Performing Arts Councils (PACs) in Natal, the Transvaal, Orange Free State and the Cape Provinces. Lavishly funded, over the next thirty years PACs gave opportunities for white writers, directors and actors who were interested in developing Eurocentric theatre, music, opera and ballet productions to experiment and create high quality productions, which would become the foundation for formal theatre in South Africa for the next three decades.”

(Banham 2004: 350)

This chapter will be concerned with a brief description of the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa, describing the period leading to their inception in 1962/63 up to their present stage of development. Eghard van der Hoven describes three periods in the development of professional drama in South Africa, following early development, as: "The period of touring companies" ("reisgeselskappe"). The National Theatre Organisation ("Nasionale Toneelorganisasie") and the period of the Performing Arts Councils (van der Hoven, 1974: 11).

Interestingly in all three periods, the formalized structures came into existence as a result of the desire on the part of professional groups of drama practitioners to gain recognition for a professional company, a body which would distinguish itself from the ragged group of traveling artists, or amateur dramatic societies and establish itself as a noble and honorable profession, with a legitimate role to play in society. The concerted effort to institutionalise drama activities in South Africa within these three periods seems to reinforce this concept of company as described by Accone later in this dissertation. Initial funding and administration of the Performing Arts by the Department of Education represents a significant step towards legitimizing dramatic activities in terms of a societal role in South Africa at the time. The establishment of the Performing Arts Councils in 1963, must therefore represent the culmination of this desire, to distinguish and elevate professional drama and hence the very strong focus in initial Performing Arts Council mandates, on the concept of fostering and promoting professional drama, within the professional resident company context. Of course, the other factor having a direct bearing on the inception of the Performing Arts Councils under direct government subsidy relates to the concept of artistic expression reflecting and promoting a national identity. The inception of the Performing Arts

Councils in 1963 must have been driven by the advancement of Afrikaner Nationalist identity by the government of the day. The direct consequence was of course that the "company" consisted of Afrikaans professionals, the so called "beroepsspelers".

Between 1947 and 1961 annual subsidy grants for the mounting of productions by the National Theatre Organization (NTO) and some music programs were forthcoming from the Department of National Education (the then Department of Education, Art and Science). Interestingly government funding seems to have been almost exclusively for drama since opera and ballet activities were generally supported by private funds. Founded in 1947, the National Theatre Organization or NTO as it was commonly known, received a small annual government subsidy and its mandate was to establish drama productions on a more professional basis. For the purpose of this paper it is interesting to note that the inception of the Performing Arts Councils and their subsequent mandates, have their origin in the establishment of professional drama in the then four provinces of the country by the National Theatre Organization.

The Performing Arts Councils were conceived in order to promote and foster professional drama initially, and that the other disciplines including opera, ballet and music theatre genres developed subsequent to the expansion of council activities around its drama programme. The National Theatre Organization seems to have been largely a touring organization which provided, in its touring of the country for employment opportunities for actors, designers and technical theatre personnel, as the productions demanded.

The efforts of the NTO and their documenting of difficulties experienced from a managerial and logistic perspective, prompted cabinet in 1962 to hear recommendations of the performing arts to be presented on a regional basis. And so the NTO (an organization concerned almost exclusively with drama) was replaced by four provincially centered Performing Arts Councils. Performing Arts Council Transvaal (PACT), Cape Performing Arts Board (CAPAB), Natal Performing Arts Council (NAPAC), and Performing Arts Council Orange Free State (PACOFSA), came into existence during the course of 1963.

These four Performing Arts Councils were registered as non-profit organizations under the provisions of Article 21 of the companies Act, No 46 of 1926. The Act made provision for the governing of the council by a board of directors consisting of a chairman and at least two other directors who were appointed by the then minister of Education. It was envisioned however that the members of the board of directors should be representative of central and provincial governments, municipalities, business, educational and other related institutions.

3. A Brief History of PACOFS - Inception and First 10 years

The founding of PACOFS in 1963 represents a coming together of organized drama, music, ballet and opera in the Free State (PACOFS 10, 1973: 2).

The sitting of the first Board of Directors took place on the 7th of February 1963 under Chairmanship of Mr. J.W.C. (Sand) du Plessis, former Administrator of the Orange Free State. In October of that same year Mr. Rex Hugo was appointed as CEO with Mr. Schalk Theron as manager: Drama. Mrs Katy Brooks was appointed as an assistant organiser with Mr. Hekkie Aucamp appointed as secretary/ accountant. Within the first ten years of its existence, the Vrystaatse Strykkwartet took up residence within PACOFS and the PACOFS ballet company was formed. The drama company consisted of four permanent members by 1964.

Some drama highlights from the first ten years of PACOFS existence include:

1964	* "Sagmoedige Neelsie" – Directed by Cobus Rossouw, with Louw Verwey, Carel Trichardt, Lucille Gillwald and Helene Carstens.
1965	* "Verkiesing sonder Politiek" (Gerhard Beukes) and "Soldateminnaars" (Bernard Shaw).
1966	* "Don Carlos" (Schiller) – Directed by Fred Engelen, with Tina Balder and Jo Gevers.
1967	* A full-time Opera Company is appointed, consisting of the Opera Singers Louisa le Roux- Cronje, Nichola Cencherle, Rosella Dare and Crawford Vernon.
1968	* The Ernest Oppenheimer Theatre in Welkom opens under PACOFS Management.
1969	* "Putsonderwater" (Bartho Smit). * Schalk Theron replaces Rex Hugo as CEO of PACOFS. * The young and very talented actor Piers Nicholson dies tragically and his family decide to sponsor the Regionally acclaimed Piers Nicholson award for contributions to Drama in the Free State.

An interesting development in recent years regarding the Piers Nicholson Award is that it is an award which is no longer awarded to talented young actors, but has rather become an award for contribution to Theatre in general in the Free State.

1970	* 39 Productions with 558 performances for the year.
1971	* "Hamlet" and "Kanna by Ko Huistoe".
1972	* "Nag van Legio", "Die Rebellie van Lafras Verwey" and " Bobaas van die Boendoe".

(PACOFS 10, 1973: 8)

In 1973 the Drama Department was headed by Gerrit Geertsema with the resident Drama Company consisting of members who were to become known in the Province as the big names in Free State Drama, names such as Cobus Rossouw, Jannie Gildenhuys and Ernst Eloff. The most Senior Managerial position outside of the Board and executive management was Head of Drama, reinforcing the strong position occupied by drama and the activities of the drama department in the activities of the council as a whole in those days. Interestingly, up to the restructuring of PACOFS in 1996, the only Directorship outside of Senior Management in the Council was held by the Artistic Director: Drama, who was the head of the Drama Department. The NTO, also known as the "Nasionale Toneel Organisasie" seems to have been founded to provide for a body to represent Professional Drama Practitioners and that this provided the impetus for the establishment of the Councils. It may therefore be argued that the Councils were formed as a result of and for the promotion of Professional Drama.

This provides an important springboard for the study to be undertaken here, since the focus of this dissertation is Professional Drama in the Free State and the state it is in post restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils. Whilst it may be argued that Professional Drama has found feasible platforms outside the Performing Arts Councils post restructuring, most notably the arts festivals, for the purpose of this paper, the argument being advanced here is that the Performing Arts Councils came into existence primarily as a vehicle for promoting and fostering Professional Drama.

Any examination of the state of Professional Drama in South Africa today, must therefore be undertaken within the context of what has historically transpired within the Performing Arts Councils. Intrinsicly linked to this idea, is of course the idea of "Company". Professional drama has always sought recognition for the status of the Professional Company of actors versus the amateur drama movements. The establishment of the councils provided the "Beroepstoneel" of the day the platform they had so desperately sought to distinguish themselves from amateur activity and to elevate Drama Practitioners, to the status of Professionals in a noble profession, representing a complete break-away from the public image of the ragged troupe of traveling actors they had been under the NTO. Importantly this status was also linked to residence, or the so called "Resident Company" idea as a break away from the "Traveling Company" idea. This core drama activity is further evident from the Council mandate at the time.

4. The Early PACOFS Mandate

The mandate for the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa seem to have had a very strong Drama focus. The "beroepstoneel" idea is very much central to much of what the mandate seeks to define and preserve. The PACOFS mandate developed at its inception in 1963 made provision for:

" Die hoofdoel waarvoor die Maatskappy opgerig word, is die volgende: -

- Om die kulturele belange van die volk van die Republiek van Suid Afrika op die gebied van die musiek, opera, ballet en toneelkuns, en om die intelligente waardering daarvoor en die kulturele lewe van die volk aan te moedig, te ontwikkel en te bevorder; om die publiek omtrent die uitvoerende kunste voor te lig en die studie en die beoefening daarvan aan te spoor.
- Om die belange van alle kunstenaars, hetsy professioneel of amateur, te behartig en te bevorder, om talentvolle kunstenaars wat andersins nie die geleentheid sou kry nie, kanse te bied om voor die publiek op te tree; om talentvolle leerlinge deur middel van beurse in staat te stel om hulle talente op die gebied van musiek, opera, ballet en die toneel te ontwikkel.
- Om alle moonlike stappe te doen in die Republiek van Suid Afrika vir die bevordering en die aanmoediging van die studie en die beoefening van musiek, ballet en die toneelkuns en hul aanverwante kunste.
- Om kunstenaars in die Republiek van Suid Afrika aan te moedig om die verhoog en aanverwante kunste as hul professie te kies en om geleenthede te skep vir vordering daarin deur middel van permanente indiensneming en toekomssekuriteit; om die skrywe van toneelstukke, komposisie van musiek en liedere aan te moedig en te bevorder.
- Om tydskrifte, koerante, brosjures, pamflette e.d.m. te laat druk, te publiseer en te versprei om die doelstellings van die Maatskappy te propageer en te bereik en om die publiek daardeur op te voed en op hoogte te hou van die werksaamhede van die Maatskappy.
- Hierdie Maatskappy sal geregistreer word as 'n Maatskappy sonder winsbejag, onder die Maatskappiewet Nr. 46 van 1926, soos gewysig."

(PACOFS Annual Report, 1967).

That the councils adhered to this mandate quite stringently for more than 30 years is evident from Annual Reports in which adherence was stated without fail.

(PACOFS Annual Reports, 1967 – 1994).

The inception of the Performing Arts Council represented the culmination of the years of development of South African Professional drama or so called "Beroepstoneel". "Beroepstoneel" had found its home and a mandate for its fostering and protection and would be the cause of much criticism leveled at the elitist position it had both striven for and achieved.

This mandate came to be interpreted post 1996 as:

"While between 1963 and 1994 theatre in South Africa was basically run by four Performing Councils, together with a handful of powerful anti-apartheid theatre companies and several theatres managed according to purely commercial principles. It might be said that the generously state funded Performing Arts Councils did what they were supposed to do - that is to cultivate and advance white elitist Euro-centric theatre" (Hauptfleisch, 2001: 11).

5. The Legacy of Criticism and Discord

Much of the criticism leveled at the Performing Arts Councils since their inception and particularly surrounding the lobbying for their restructure post 1994, has been focused around the exclusivity of the council activities for largely white companies of artists performing in largely Euro-centric genres to the exclusion of many indigenous African artists and genres. The Drama Departments within councils especially had become viewed as bastions of Afrikaner "Beroepstoneel" to the exclusion of English and African interest. Whilst this may not have been entirely true in terms of representation within Drama Companies at the time of restructuring. Within the existing permanent companies just prior to the dismantling of the "Company" structures within arts councils, it could certainly be argued that "Beroepstoneel" or Afrikaans Drama played a huge role in the establishment of the "Company" concept at the inception of the Performing Arts Councils in 1963.

This criticism came not only from quarters concerned with the representation of groups other than Afrikaans drama practitioners, but even from within the "Beroepstoneel" itself. In 1974, just over ten years after the inception of the performing arts councils, Eghard van der Hoven is concerned about the state of Professional Drama precisely because of the establishment of the so called Professional Companies within the Councils.

In an article entitled "Hoe het ons gevorder", "How have we progressed", he writes that there were eight recognized Professional Companies of actors in South Africa in 1936 and that by 1945 these had increased to twenty five. He quotes an example of a small town in the Karoo receiving three companies of Afrikaans professional actors in one month in 1929. In 1945 Middelburg received four plays in one week (although he concedes that this was not the case for every week of the year). According to available documentation approximately 250 Afrikaans plays were performed between the periods 1925 to 1947 which represents a combined 37500 performances. This is an average of twelve plays and 1600 performances per year. Of the 250 plays at least ninety percent were translations and that there were at least 125 full time actors or so called "Beroepsspelers" in the field (Van der Hoven, 1974).

What had changed by 1974? It seems within the councils that Professional Drama Companies were limited to three (Natal had no Permanent Drama Company), with the possibility of another two being established, and that fifty Professional Actors were employed by these companies. In 1974 thirty two plays were performed of which sixty percent were translated. These plays were performed 878 times and were attended by about 208 000 theatre-goers. He concludes: "less Professional actors in 1974 than in 1945, less translations of plays, less performances but a greater variety" (Van der Hoven, 1974). It would seem that even ten short years after the inception of the Councils that there was some concern over the role of the Councils in ensuring the survival of Professional Drama, especially Afrikaans Drama:

"What of the future? It is a fact that today English has overwhelmed the South African entertainment industry with almost 100% of our staged entertainment being presented in English. Despite the high standard of Afrikaans productions, often of international standard, fear exists amongst many of us (professional practitioners), that Afrikaans drama, relatively speaking, will remain a rarity and that in cities where almost 80% of Afrikaans theatre-goers are situated, Afrikaans drama will fail to claim its rightful place. This fear despite the many talented actors, directors, playwrights, designers and stage technicians which we have at our disposal (in the Performing Arts Councils) today. Whether or not the Councils - with the many tasks they undertake in other areas of the performing arts en their policy of equal representation for both language groups (English and Afrikaans) - will manage to secure a better balance for Afrikaans drama, is doubtful" (Van der Hoven, 1974).

AFRIKAANS DRAMA FOR THE PERIOD 1925 – 1947:

Number of Afrikaans Plays 1925 – 1947	Number of performances 1925 – 1947	Average No. of Plays per year	Average No. of performances / year	Translations (not original Afrikaans Plays)	Number of professionally recognized actors in the field
250	37 500	12	1600	90%	125

AFRIKAANS DRAMA IN 1974:

Number of Afrikaans Plays 1974	Number of performances 1974	Audience attendance no.	Average No. of performances / year	Translations (not original Afrikaans Plays)	Number of professionally recognized actors in the field
32	878	208 000	878	60%	50

(PACOFS 10, 1973: 8).

From the above statistics two points of interest emerge. Firstly, that the number of original Afrikaans productions (not translations from English or other languages) had increased dramatically. This could be interpreted as denoting the prominence of original Afrikaans Drama in PAC drama companies. Secondly, the statistics point to a decline in the number of professionally recognized actors.

These points beg the question : Had the Performing Arts Council Drama Companies already by 1974 become elitist companies which provided little or no recognition for the professional status of actors outside of themselves? Although some reservation as regards the statistical comparison must be conceded for statistics gathered over the period 1925 to 1947 as opposed to a single comparative year (1974). Yet van der Hoven suggests quite firmly that “less professional actors existed in 1974 than in 1945” (van der Hoven 1974). A steady decline in the number of professionally recognized artists was therefore recorded, which may well point to the perceived “exclusivity” of Performing Arts Council Drama Companies long before the issue had reached its zenith in the 1990's, notwithstanding the obvious imbalances between recognized black and white professional practitioners. This is significant specifically because of the criticism leveled at Resident Drama companies on the grounds of their inaccessibility to a wider base of artists. Criticism which lay at the root of the dissolution of Resident PAC Drama Companies in 1996.

Van der Hoven's question in 1974 on how we have progressed, provides an interesting marker in history for Drama Companies. Are Drama companies by their very nature plagued by accusations of inequality and inaccessibility? Has the balance van der Hoven described in 1974 been achieved? Whilst it may be argued that any discussion around the state of Professional Theatre in South Africa must allow for the most significant factor being funding, arts bureaucrats and politicians will argue that today the NAC provides a far more democratic means of distributing funding to a broader and more representative base of South African Artists than was previously allowed for under the Performing Arts Council structures. In simple terms, this would seem to provide for the most "balancing" factor. Yet funding of projects for perpetuating the very existence of a professional platform in South Africa, still remains the major stumbling block for theatre practitioners and Companies who have been forced into new strategies for securing funding to ensure survival. Despite the supposed unbundling of Performing Arts Council funding under the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils, the issue of State funding for the arts is still very much a bone of contention for many theatre practitioners and companies of professional artists. Responses from local artists analyzed later in this dissertation provide some ideas as to why funding remains inaccessible.

The Establishment of the National Arts Council was designed to more equitably distribute funding to a wider base of practicing artists and criteria and means of application are described later in this paper. However, even this attempt at fairer, less elitist distribution causes artists in many quarters to become either very hot under the collar, or simply apathetic, as will be evident from responses to a questionnaire distributed among actors and informal interviews with local artists and theatre practitioners that will be analyzed later in this dissertation. This paper has proposed to examine the state of professional drama post closure of the PACOFS Drama department, rendering an examination of drama activities in the PAC between 1974 and the closure of the resident drama company in 1996 irrelevant. Rather, the examination of a typical operational year for the PACOFS Drama department would provide for a useful comparison to work currently being undertaken by professional drama companies in Bloemfontein. Having established an overview of the History and rationale for formation of the PACs in South Africa, rationale for the formation of a resident PAC Drama company has been provided. Since a comparative study is proposed, what follows is an examination of a full production year in the former PACOFS Drama to provide a benchmark for the kind of work currently being undertaken by private companies and to provide insights into the number of productions, production cost and artists involvement – with specific reference to local artist participation.

6. The last year of the PACOFS Drama Department

In 1996, the last year of the existence of the PACOFS Drama Department the Permanent Company Artists were divided into:

Permanent Company Actors	Puppet Company
5 Actors	2 Manipulators

Within the first quarter of 1996, it had become clear to the management of the Drama Department that restructuring of the Council as a whole would imply retrenchment of all its members, from Top Management down to all members of the Drama and Puppet Companies. What was not clear was the time frame within which this was expected to happen. The draught of the White Paper on Arts and Culture had been taken up in Parliament and the proverbial sword was now literally hanging over Drama's head. Planning for the year ahead, with provision for additional staff members, artists and administrators went ahead. What is interesting from the following salary budget from that year, is to note the salary scales at which artists and staff were to be appointed and to get a sense of what structures were envisioned for staffing the Department:

2 X ARTISTIC DIRECTORS
(G. Kamper and S. Maredi)
MANAGER: DRAMA
(A. Litheko)
ASSISTENT DIRECTORS / CHOREOGRAPHERS
(G. Pholo, D. Maumgaum, J. Jacob)
ORGANISER
(New appointment)
SECRETARY: DRAMA
(I. Maleho)
COMPANY MANAGER: DRAMA / RESIDENT ACTOR
(P. Taljaard)
RESIDENT ACTORS
(P. Brand, M. du Toit, M. Carpede, O. Cowan, A. Kamper, M de Koker)

**DRAMA DEPARTMENT
BUDGET: 1 April 1996 – 31 March 1997**

Comparing production cost for a company like the resident Drama Company within PACOFS, is complicated by the fact that salaries for resident actors are budgeted for within the Drama Department budget (Table 6.1) within PACOFS as a whole and that production cost (Table 6.2) is separated from salaries. Within the private company cost reflection later in this dissertation, salaries for actors comprises the largest portion of the production cost.

This may explain the perception of lavishly funded productions under the PAC Drama companies versus the moderate current-day festival productions.

Table 6.1

Name	Salary	Bonus	Pension	Medical	Allowance	Total
G. Kamper	75699.00	6308.25	12490.34	5821.20	36000.00	136318.79
S. Maredi	70218.00	5851.50	11585.97	5821.20	24000.00	117476.67
A. Lithoko	48312.00	4026.00	7971.48	3326.40	12000.00	75635.88
G. Pholo	20724.00	1727.0	3419.46	2839.20	3600.00	32309.66
D. Maumgaan	20724.00	1727.00	3419.46	4334.40	3600.00	33804.86
J. Jacob	32499.0	2708.25	5362.34	3175.20	3600.00	47344.79
Organiser	41019.00	3418.25	6768.14	3259.20	3600.00	58064.59
I. Maleho	26397.00	2199.75	4355.51	4788.00		37740.26
P. Taljaard	41019.00	3418.25	6768.14	4989.60	3600.00	59794.99
P. Brand	53781.00	4481.75	8873.87	3326.40		70463.02
M du Toit	27615.00	2301.25	4556.48	4788.00	3600.00	42860.73
M. Carpede	21615.00	1801.25	3566.48	2839.20	3600.00	33421.93
O. Cowan	24288.00	2024.00	4007.52			30319.52
A. Kamper	16149.00	1345.75	2664.59			20159.34
M de Koker	14916.00	1243.00	2461.14	2461.20	3600.00	24681.34
	534 975.00	44 581.25	88 270.92	51 769.20	100 800.00	820 396.37
					Bursaries	8000.00
					Retirement	8000.00
					S + T	10000.00
					Entertain.	4000.00
					Total	850 396.37

(PACOFS Drama files: 1996)

In an attempt to find strategic means of continuing with the work to which it was committed within that year as well as to find a means of determining some kind of future for its members, the Drama Department's management presented the PACOFS board with a privatization proposal. The details of the Privatization Proposal provided for the following:

According to the discussion draft of the White Paper "Government Policy concerning the Performing Arts makes provision for Project Funding for Drama Departments only. No system of Direct Funding has been included in the proposed system of subsidy for Arts Departments within the Performing Arts Councils. For this reason the PACOFS Drama Department wishes to make optimum use of the time allowed for the restructuring and diversifying of the PACOFS Funding base in order to restructure, accommodate budget cuts and to plan ahead for the future of Professional Drama in the Free State. It is the belief of the PACOFS Drama Department that the Privatization Proposal presented to the PACOFS Board in May 1996 presents the most viable means of achieving the above. It must be pointed out, however that this relates to the survival of the Professional Production Component for which there is no direct subsidy allowed whereas the Community Arts Component may well be directly funded. The plan contained within the Privatization Proposal presented to the PACOFS Board in May 1996 relates to the course of action to be taken by this Component of the Drama Department's present activities."

(PACOFS Drama Privatization Proposal, May 1996).

The Privatization Proposal was unique to PACOFS, since none of the other Drama Departments in any of the other Performing Arts Councils in the country had undertaken any such initiative. What made this initiative unique, was the fact that such an initiative was in fact in accordance with the provisions of the White Paper and that such action was in fact endorsed by the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology, as is evident from the following minutes of a meeting held in November 1996 between members of PACOFS Drama and The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology.

At the meeting held on Fri 22/11/96, between Free State Ensemble and The Department of Arts, Culture, Science And Technology, the following issues arising from a discussion of the proposals on the table were raised, and the following recommendations made according to the minutes of the meeting:

Recommendations were made to the effect that, should Free State Ensemble, for planning purposes, wish to access funding to coincide with the suggested date for closure of the PACOFS department (30 March 1997), that PACOFS should establish assistance to support the Independence of Free State Ensemble in order for Free State Ensemble to achieve an independently secure financial base from which to source and access funding for further projects.

In addition recommendations were made to the effect that, should the establishment of such an infrastructure for Free State Ensemble not coincide with the suggested date for closure of the Drama Department, that PACOFS, as part of its assistance to the process of independence, be liable for salary components for the members of Free State Ensemble in the employ of PACOFS until such time as independence became effective.

Recommendations were made for a delegation from the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology to visit PACOFS in order for the initiatives described to form part of the present research being undertaken by the Department in investigating the future of the Performing Arts Councils (PACOFS Drama Dept. Backup files, 1996).

From these recommendations it is quite clear that PACOFS was expected to play a big part in assisting its Drama Department in privatizing and that this privatization was viewed as being in line with the White Paper intention. One distinguishing company dynamic which emerges from the PACOFS Drama department budget and structuring, as well as the companies' production budgeting is the fact that resident actors, apart from receiving fixed monthly salaries, also benefitted from the PACOFS pension fund to which PACOFS contributed in part, a medical aid scheme, housing allowance as well as bonus structures and miscellaneous allowances for sustenance and travel when these could not be provided by PACOFS. The researcher finds this to be an extremely important factor in comparing the activities of professional drama companies in the Free State for the following reason :

Artists who are taken care of to the extent that resident company members of the PACOFS drama department were, do not have to concern themselves with any dynamic of the production they are involved in other than interpretation of their role.

This cannot be said for companies where artists are required to select productions for performance based on a relative chance to have it well attended and therefore to receive a relative income. In addition these artists are often required to assist with marketing and logistical aspects of the production in addition to their interpretative role as artist.

An additional distinguishing comparison based on the separation of salary and production budget relates to the compromising of production cost on the part of private companies in favor of providing for a salary as opposed to having a separated budget system provided for - where one had absolutely nothing to do with the other. The PACOFS Drama department production expenditure of R665 650 and its income of only R212 859 (Table 6.2), for the last year of its existence in no way impacted on the artists financially since their salaries had been budgeted for by PACOFS and paid irrespective of production income – something that few private companies can claim.

Despite a year of negotiation between the PACOFS Board and the DACST for the privatization initiative, the PACOFS Drama Department delivered a full year of productions:

Table 6.2

Production	No. of Performances	Attendance	Expenditure	Income
Little Red Riding Hood- Welk,	4	1620	9000	7399
Little Red Riding Hood - Bfn.	6	775	5310	1152
Maru	10	1612	12830	8491
Hoe Later Hoe Kwater	8	783	44877	3065
Black Age	10	1413	143313	5180
Puppet Theatre (Risky)	73	82145	35866	41583
Die Pakkamer	13	608	23388	1291
Pinochio	32	10344	112425	72792
Maluti Players (Zastron)	5	3093	931	unknown
Kringe in 'n Bos	1 0	3558	41829	34360
My Children, My Africa	9	658	49855	3822
Heel against the Head	18	4157	18786	unknown
Out of Order	5	629	11355	unknown
Uit die Bloute	4	1200	24966	22252
Johannes Kerkorrel	5	645	13218	8939
Jazz Hounds	2	127	4365	1338
Donkersmart	6	776	99405	unknown
Witblitz	3	756	13931	1195
Total	223	114899	665650	212859

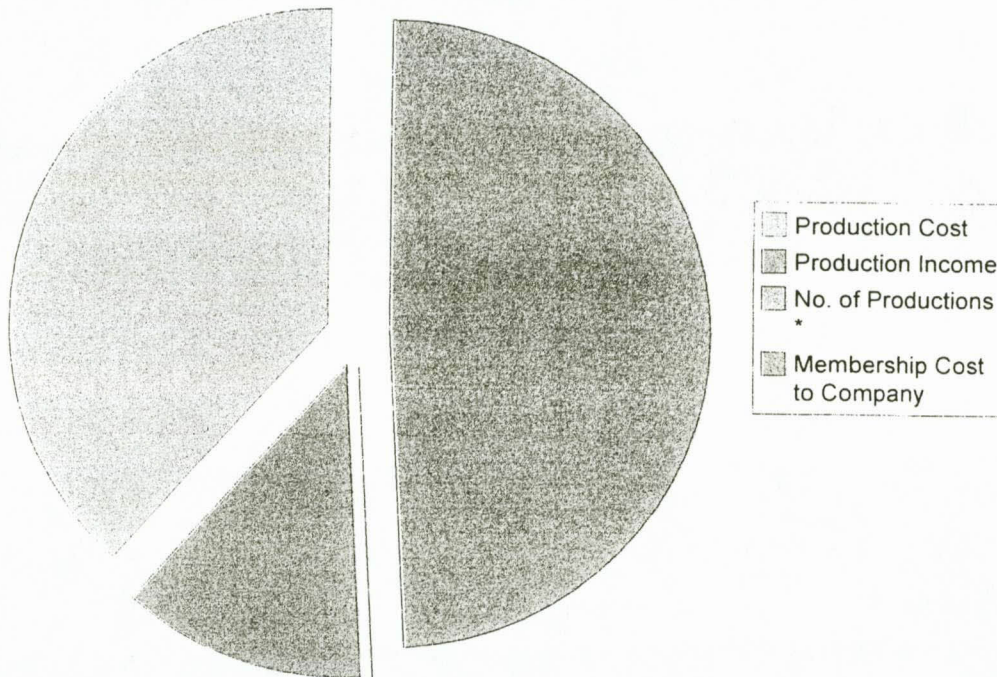
(PACOFS Annual Report, 1996/1997).

PACOFS Drama : the last Production Year

PRODUCTION YEAR STATISTICS :

Company Membership	15
Production Cost	665650
Production Income	212859
No. of Productions *	10
Membership Cost to Company	850396

PACOFS DRAMA



The above data is supplied in order to give a concise graphical overview of some of the statistical aspects pertaining to the final year of the PACOFS Drama Department.

This study proposes to compare this graphical with drama companies which came into existence after the closure of PACOFS Drama.

* The number of productions differs from Table 6.2 in that productions listed here are resident productions ie. self produced by PACOFS Drama and are seperated from those bought in from outside.

7. The White Paper and the rationale for closing the Drama Departments of the PACs

The rationale for the closure of the Drama Departments is contained in section 11 of the White Paper on Arts and Culture of 1996:

"At present, the largest portion of public funds for the arts goes directly to four Performing Arts Councils (PACs), which are registered in terms of Section 21 of the Companies Act of 1973. There are few opportunities for artists, other than those employed by these state-subsidized institutions, to access public funds to support the creation and dissemination of their work. The activities of these institutions, their continued access to State monies, and their putative transformation, has created more controversy than any other issue facing the Ministry. But their transformation has already begun, with the appointment of representative Boards, the right-sizing of their infrastructure and opening of their facilities to a broader spectrum of arts practitioners"

(White Paper on Arts and Culture, 1996).

The Drama Department at PACOFS was closed in March 1997 with all its members receiving severance packages. Another "Beroepstoneel" era had come to an end.

Free State Ensemble was the first professional drama company to come into existence in Bloemfontein post restructuring of PACOFS. Free State Ensemble consisted of former members of PACOFS drama and had negotiated its privatization and facilitated it in accordance with the stipulations of the White Paper. This was unique of all the PACs nationally at the time. Although the White Paper made provision for this occurrence, Free State Ensemble was the only company within the PACs to privatize in this manner.

8. The Privatized PACOFS Drama : Free State Ensemble

Whilst preparing to set off as the new Free State Ensemble, the PACOFS Drama Department proposed the following production plan and budget in collaboration with PACOFS.

Professional Drama in the Free State

Table 8.1 lists productions which were planned for PACOFS to host in the year following privatization of the Drama department.

Although the planning was never followed as it is set out here, an indication is given of how it was envisioned the new company would collaborate with PACOFS in producing a year's work.

The left hand column of Table 8.1 reflects productions for which, it was envisioned, PACOFS would be responsible. The right hand column shows Free State Ensemble productions and the attached budget reflects a shared annual production budget of close to one million rand.

An interesting comparison with the actual work undertaken is possible given the actual productions produced by Free State Ensemble (reflected later in this dissertation).

TABLE 8.1

<u>SUKOVS : PLAYHOUSE</u>	<u>FREE STAT ENSEMBLE</u>
09.04.97 - 19.04.97 On My Birthday	
	23.04.97 – 03.05.97 Die Pakkamer
	05.05.97 – 17.05.97 Ashoop Blue::
	19.05.97 – 31.05.97 Agnes van Onse Heer
28.05.97 - 07.06.97 Boopsie, Cooksie, Doopsie	
(Tour and Grahamstown to follow)	
03.06.97 - 05.07.97 Die Klein Prinsie	
22.07.97 - 02.08.97 Once a Pirate	
(Tour to follow - with Seputla Sebogodi)	
28.07.97 - 30.08.97 Shakespeare Puppets	28.07.97 – 30.08.97 Shakespeare Puppets
06.08.97 - 23.08.97 Flooi in die Kooi	
(1 Week Tour prior or afterwards)	
03.09.97 - 13.09.97 Nagspel	03.09.97 – 13.09.97 Nagspel
01.10.97 - 11.10.97 Nongogo	
12.11.97 - 22.11.97 Come and hope with me.	10.12.97 – 20.12.97 'n Kersprogram
Februarie 1998 - Klug	

Table 8.1 is interesting from the point of view of what Free State Ensemble had envisioned would be their collaborative production schedule with PACOFS. Only 3 of these productions were realised. Table 8.2 reflects what the above production plan in collaboration with PACOFS would have cost.

**Budget: PACOFS PLAYHOUSE in association with FREE
STATE ENSEMBLE**

TABLE 8.2

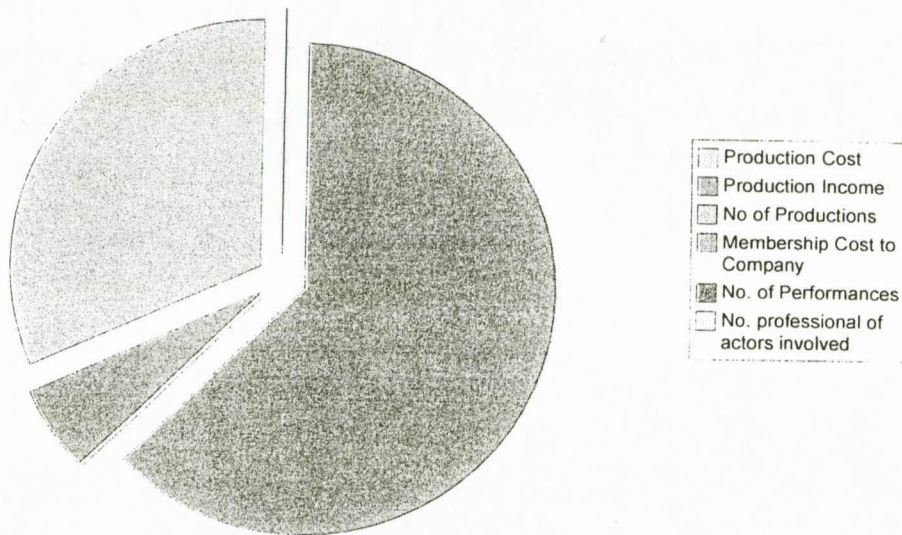
<u>On My Birthday</u> - (In association with North West Arts Council)					
Expense	R17 920.00	Income	R4 768.46	Subsidy	R13 151.54
<u>Boopsie, Cooksie, Doopsie</u> - (Playhouse Production)					
Expense	R153 394.00	Income	R25 421.26	Subsidy	R128 528.74
<u>Die Klein Prinsie</u> - (Playhouse Production)					
Expense	R188 245.36	Income	R65 726.84	Subsidy	R122 518.52
<u>Once a Pirate</u> - (In association with Seputla Sebogodi and Paul Slabolepzy)					
Expense	R 38 481.60	Income	R21 210.70	Subsidy	R17 270.90
<u>Flooi in die Kooi</u> - (In association with PACT Drama)					
Expense	R201 200.00	Income	R116 997.43	Subsidy	R84 202.57
<u>Nongogo</u> - (Playhouse Production)					
Expense	R84 805.90	Income	R15 947.50	Subsidy	R68 858.40
<u>1 x Farce</u> (Import Production)					
Expense	R201 200.00	Income	R116 997.43	Subsidy	R84 202.57
<u>In Association with Free State Ensemble</u>					
Die Pakkamer		Subsidy	:		R19 435.90
Ashoop blues (Na die verhaal van Job)		Subsidy	:		R35 110.22
Agnes van Onse Heer		Subsidy	:		R33 843.02
Nagspel		Subsidy	:		R28 800.00
<u>Other Productions</u>					
Come and hope with me (With CAD Department)		Subsidy	:		R130 000.00
Community Groups Assistance		Subsidy	:		R 50 000.00
<u>Administration</u>					R150 000.00
		Total			R965 922.38

Free State Ensemble : The first Production Year

PRODUCTION YEAR STATISTICS :

Company Membership	5
Production Cost	162048
Production Income	28745
No of Productions	3
Membership Cost to Company	320000
No. of Performances	41
No. professional of actors involved	6

FREE STATE ENSEMBLE



The above data is supplied in order to provide a concise graphical overview of some of the statistical aspects pertaining to the final year of the PACOFS Drama Department.

This study proposes to compare this graphical data with that of drama companies which came into existence after the closure of PACOFS Drama.

* The number of productions differs from Tables 8.1 and 8.2 in that the productions listed here are resident productions ie. self-produced by Free State Ensemble and separated from the collaborative productions planned with PACOFS.

The privatized PACOFS Drama company, the Free State Ensemble commenced its activities to coincide with the closing of PACOFS Drama. The company took up residence in the Observatory Theatre and set out to achieve the following:

8.1 Mission

To utilize the Observatory Theatre as a platform for exposing all facets of the community to Theatre and Dramatic Art and to establish the Theatre as a forum for existing and aspiring professional talent. To reaffirm the role Theatre has to play in the community by establishing the Observatory Theatre as a venue for Professional Theatre Ventures of a standard to be found only within the professional arena, thereby providing for entertainment, education, experimentation and enlightenment in the search for a new identity within the Dramatic Arts without compromising the quality of art presented.

8.2 Objectives

The establishment of an accessible and affordable Theatre for the Dramatic Arts in all its facets. Promotion and reaffirmation of the irreplaceable role of the Arts within the community.

- To play a role together with other stakeholders in the rebuilding of disadvantaged communities.
- To play a role in the National Search for a new Theatre identity by producing multi-cultural Professional Theatre.
- Financial control over the Observatory Theatre Project by means of: An association with PACOFS.
- Insurance and Maintenance of a practical theatre by securing funding, sponsorship, donations and gifts in kind.
- Continuous upholding of Mission, Aims and Objectives by means of presenting projects and productions of distinctive quality.

8.3 Projects

- Productions by popular and developing professional artists.
- Multicultural Productions of New works by the resident Company and local actors.
- Children's Theatre Productions as well various puppet Theatre projects.
- Presenting workshops to stimulate and develop interest, expertise and knowledge of the art of the stage.

*Presenting touring Educational and Life Skills Programmes to benefit the larger Free State community and schools.

* Developing ties with international artists and arts institutions in order to foster ties and the exchange of artists within the international arts community. An example is the Netherlands who through the Afrikaans-Nederlandse Instituut have maintained contact by means of international exchange Programmes.

*Availing the Observatory Theatre as a venue for seminars, functions, gatherings, festivals and other occasions. (Free State Ensemble Mission Statement 1997)

8.4 Members:

Outside of the Board of Directors, the Free State Ensemble's executive members were :

- Gerben Kamper : Artistic Director
- Peter Taljaard : Managing Director
- Atie Kamper : Marketing and Publicity
- Onida Cowan : Company Manager
- Petrus Modise : Theatre Manager

In 1997, the first year of its existence, Free State Ensemble hosted a number of productions at the Observatory Theatre. Its role as impresario saw a program of productions for the year but their own produced work amounts to just 3 productions in their first year.

Free State Ensemble: First Production Year

TABLE 8.3

Production	Date	No. of Performances	No. Of Actors	Sponsor	Production Budget
Donkersmart (Die Movie)	21,22 March and 16 Apr – 3 May 1997	14	9	PACOFS / Belgian Government	99 405
Agnes van ons Liewe Heer	9 – 24 May 1997	12	3	PACOFS	33 843
Scrooge	3 – 24 December	15	5	PACOFS	28 800

(FREE STATE ENSEMBLE BACK-UP FILES, 1997)

At the time of writing of this dissertation, Free State Ensemble is no longer in existence and the Observatory Theatre is now once again managed by PACOFS.

The first production year of Free State Ensemble saw its own work (productions produced by Free State Ensemble), financed by PACOFS directly. Work was produced in association with PACOFS, but in effect PACOFS provided funding for these productions directly.

Free State Ensemble had however applied to the NAC for institutional funding and received funding in 1998.

In this sense Free State Ensemble was the first professional drama company to make use of the new funding structures provided for by the White Paper. Utilization of these funding structures by newly formed drama companies represents a complete change from the way funding was secure¹ and utilized before.

What follows is an investigation into the previous funding structures in the performing arts in South Africa and an unpacking of the new structures.

The next chapter describes an attempt by Councils to arrive at a scientific formula for subsidising PACs, followed comparatively by funding structures available through the NAC, currently available to artists.

9. Government Financing of the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa prior to the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils in 1996

In 1986, The National Department of Education commissioned an investigation into Government financing of the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa in an attempt to arrive at a more structured means for government to provide financial support to these organizations. The result was a formula for financing the Councils. The formula can be summarized as follows:

For artistic and general programmes, the subsidy formula was dependent upon the concept of "contact hours", rendered in the formula as (E').

The subsidy formula read as:

$$" E' = 3EO + 3EB + ED + 2Em + 100\ 000$$

Where:

EO = effective attendance contact hours in opera

EB = effective attendance contact hours in ballet

ED = effective attendance contact hours in drama

EM = effective attendance contact hours in music

E' is expressed in thousands. "

(South African National Education Policy Document 1986.)

For any year the subsidy formula for a particular Performing Arts Council depended on two parameters internal to that Performing Arts Council. These were:

- (a) the projected subsidy effective attendance contact hours, or "E";
- (b) the projected increase in the subsidy effective attendance contact hours from the previous (projected) maximum.

The formula also made provision for salaries for Performing and Creative artists, personnel other than Performing and Creative artists, Service workers, supplies, services, equipment, books, journals etc.

This was a comprehensive and scientific subsidy formula for the Arts Councils.

10. Current structures for financing of the Performing Arts in South Africa.

The Performing Arts Councils themselves are still directly Government funded with PACOFS having received an allocation by the Department of Arts and Culture for the 2004 to 2007 period of an amount of R48 741 000.

(PACOFS Annual Report, 2004: 9)

Artists, however have the National Arts Council to apply to for project funding. The following is a summary of the channels and guidelines provided for artists applying for NAC funding, based on a study of documentation pertaining to application:

NAC Funding Criteria - Theatre/Drama

Individuals, community groups, institutions and companies can apply for funding through the National Arts Council. Criteria for funding include : " Funding is supplied for the following disciplines: Craft, Dance and Choreography, Literature, Music and Musical Theatre, Theatre/Drama and Visual Arts. Organizations, institutions and groups should be formally registered. Applicants should be over 18 years and have South African citizenship. There will be no funding of ad hoc groups" (NAC Website)

Eligibility

- Individuals (e.g. playwrights, community groups, institutions and organizations)

Types of project

Funding may be sought for the following projects in theatre:

- Research for script development
- Scriptwriting
- Performances
- Storytelling and puppetry

Budgetary items

The following items may be funded by the NAC

- Rehearsal fees for artists
- Performance fees for artists
- Venue

- Publicity cost
- Administration costs
- Traveling costs
- Accommodation for touring productions
- Accounting and auditing fees
- Costumes and props
- Other project related costs

(Information derived from National Arts Council Website)

The NAC states in its funding criteria documentation quite clearly that it is unlikely to fund the entire budget of the project. Applicants must supply Quotations for the above costs with the application form. From interviews conducted with local artists Maria de Koker and Babes Mphatseng, this factor of NAC application poses a problem. These artists have no other source of income. By not funding the entire project these artists have to find other means of subsidizing the project which calls on entrepreneurial and business negotiation skills that these artists do not necessarily have.

Time frame

The maximum period for running a project is twelve months.

Bursaries

Individual bursaries are offered for studies toward a post-graduate qualification in South Africa and abroad. Existing Criteria for funding and how projects are judged are as follows:

Project Funding

The NAC will fund projects based on merit. Artists are therefore advised to raise other funding as well. Generally, funding will be for the artistic programme. Running costs, recording (CDs and videos), music instruments, infrastructure, and capital costs will not be funded. Quotations for costs should be provided with the application form and applicants MUST declare other sources of funds. The maximum period for running a project is twelve months. Projects are funded once in a financial year. All applications must be made on official NAC application forms.

Touring Projects

Applications for touring are only considered if the proposed tour contributes to the national profile

of the company or group and adds to the lives of South Africans in general. Applicants that have been invited to perform abroad should have some form of financial support from the host country or host organization. The host country/organization should send proof that costs such as accommodation, food, daily subsistence and transport within the country will be covered. A performance agreement should also accompany the application to the NAC. In no cases will the NAC be the sole funder.

Each project is rated for:

- National impact - whether the project will have concrete national impact or influence
- Clear, careful and detailed planning
- Creative, organisational and technical excellence
- Cost-effectiveness
- A multiplier/catalytic effect, impacting positively on the development of arts and culture
- Sustainability and viability
- Its legacy, or whether it will leave behind something concrete, constructive and quantifiable
- Prestige, or the honour it will bring to the country
- Innovation, originality or uniqueness
- Applicants were rated in terms of commitment to:
 - Affirmative action
 - Promotion of gender equality
 - Non-racialism in membership. Boards and management
 - Independence from party politics
 - Empowerment of young people
 - Involvement of rural communities
 - Development programmes
 - Consistency with or promotion of the Bill of Rights
 - Democratic values and practices
- The extent to which the project contributes to reconciliation and national unity.

Each organisation applying is judged on:

- Its bona fides, and required to show proof of its organisational existence
- Its record of financial accountability
- The effectiveness of its accounting structure and Board
- Its management and leadership skills
- Its lack of any history of scandal or misappropriation of funds
- A record of completing successful projects
- National representivity and impact
- Sustainability and viability
- Commitment and attempts to become self-sufficient
- An ability to communicate to the target audience.

(National Arts Council Website, www.nac.org.za/nindingMoreInfo.html)

11. Perceptions on the part of Artists regarding NAC funding and structures in place for accessing funding :

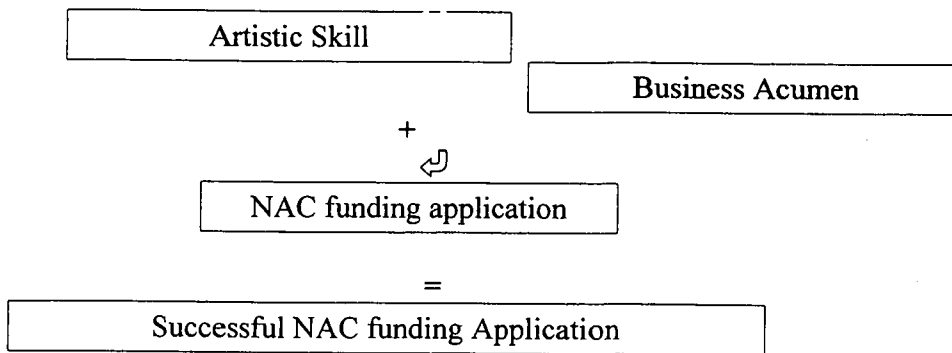
According to the Criteria the NAC sets for evaluating applications by individuals, responses to NAC applications as experienced by applicants from an interview conducted with Babes Mphatseng and Maria de Koker, two Free State resident actors, the following summarised findings apply :

- Artists generally feel secure and comfortable about describing their artistic vision and ability – although describing it within space allowed on official forms is limiting.
- Similarly creativity, vision, imagination and originality are sometimes difficult to express in writing – especially for performing artists who prefer vocalisation above written description.
- A record of an ability to manage and complete projects or studies is sometimes difficult for first time applicants to obtain.
- Artists do not always feel their projects or productions will have likely national impact – and that this seems to be an expectation is intimidating.
- A general feeling of insecurity over writing skills and the perceived dependance of the successful application hereon.

Conclusional Finding :

The practice of stage craft is a studied skill that stems from the imaginative employment of

linguistic and literary as well as physical ability to portray characters and handle the technical demands of the theatre. These skills do not encompass the wide range of business and administrative skills required for successful funding application or administration of a project. Artists may possess an abundance of the type of skill required to initiate and create a project, but none of the necessary skill required for fund securing and successful administration of the project.



Ironically it is mostly these artists who were to benefit from restructuring. By implication therefore not all artists can access funding especially those who do not possess the skills necessary for successful fund application.

12. The Restructured PACOFS: Current Mandate

"Today there is an urgent need to balance the interests of what is essentially elitist socialactivity with the need to contribute to the cultural development of the nation as a whole"

(Hauptfleisch, 2001: 11).

And that indeed was the mandate as proposed in 1963. Much of the language and content of the present mandate sounds very similar to the 1963 mandate, but the development and promotion of the Arts is now very much geared towards a redressing of past imbalances by:

- providing additional assistance and resources to historically disadvantaged groups.
- promoting greater access to the arts " (Pacofs Annual Report, 2003: 4).

The closure of all the Arts Departments within PACOFS, retrenchments and streamlined management structures are intended to render what is essentially a service infrastructure more cost effective since no artistic work is produced. The current structure of PACOFS is:

Chief Executive Officer

Director	Manager	Manager	Manager	Manager
Technical and Support Services	Finance	Human Resources	Business Units	Artistic x 2
Mechanical & Building	Stores		Marketing	Artistic Organiser
Electrical & Electronics	Box Office		Wardrobe	
Workshop	Payroll		Facilities	
Support & Services	Accountant		Catering	
Stage Services	Ass Accountant		Truck Hire	
	Switchboard		Props	
	IT			

(PACOFS Annual Report, 2004: 38).

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This represents quite an organizational change from the way the Performing Arts Councils were structured before.

What has not changed considerably however, is what Hauptfleisch describes as generous state funding. PACOFS total expenditure for the financial year 2003/2004 amounted to 19,2 million Rand (PACOFS annual report 2004: 8).

Whilst it seems fairly obvious a function for a Performing Arts Council to be concerned with the protection and promotion of national cultures, it is this very terrain of national identity and nation building that is at the heart of the debate which preceded the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils.

This scope of this paper does not allow for a very thorough investigation of how this system has been decentralized, what led to its decentralization and how this has resulted in the springing up of numerous independent companies, artists single handedly braving the platforms, with self-developed (and often funded) work and the proliferation of festivals and arts festival activity throughout the country. Such research would demonstrate very clearly the complete change in Performing Arts infrastructure that has taken place in South Africa over the last ten years.

The provisions of the White paper on Arts and culture of 1996 led a radical change in the way Performing Arts Councils were run and funded in apartheid days. The major heavily subsidized Performing Arts Complexes, the Nico Malan theatre in Cape Town, the State Theatre in Pretoria, the Civic Theatre in Johannesburg, the Sand du Plessis Theatre in Bloemfontein and the Playhouse Theatre in Durban were what are today considered to be the monuments to Apartheid Euro-centric Arts development in South Africa.

Of course, today these institutions have become facilitators with increasingly limited funding, forced in many cases to charge rentals and production costs way above the means of many smaller companies. This has seen a move away from what the white paper intended i.e. NAC funded privately initiated projects, hosted or "facilitated" by the PACs in favour of festivals and other "cheaper" platforms with less red tape.

This also relates to the way the PACs are viewed by artists today:

"unfriendly, fascist, run-down buildings in the bad part(s) of town; mono-functional entities characterized by Neanderthal service and run by uninspired 'dinosaurs' "

(Van Graan, 2001: 19).

Another very interesting change in the way Performing Arts Councils were run before and the new operating procedure, relates to another aspect which will be touched on in this body of research and that is: "the company concept".

A fairly poorly documented aspect of Professional Drama in any community or geographical area of South Africa is the "company" concept. This concept has been described by Accone as the founding impulse of institutions fostering professional theatre practitioners (Accone 2001: 17).

Accone notes something interesting in his observations about the Market theatre:

"In addition to these more general concerns, the problem facing the Market Theatre has at its core other issues that are more closely related to the elusive and contradictory nature of the evolving roles and functions of the Performing Arts institutions within post-apartheid South Africa:

"There is a deeper, more intimate malaise at the heart of the problem of the Market. It is that its founding impulse has been all but forgotten. Its precursor "The Company", was just that, a company. Sharing more than theatre aesthetics, it bonded together individuals with similar convictions about Performing artists, their role in society and South Africa of the day. It was not exactly a chorus of agreement about life, the universe and everything, but it was a Robin Hood-like venture, daring to defy the sheriff of Nottingham in the guise of the Apartheid state "

(Accone, 2001: 17).

It is this desire of especially artists concerned with producing drama work that keeps being raised by artists in any discussion around securing employment or funding. It would seem that drama practitioners particularly express a desire to belong to a Company.

13. Artist's Perceptions

A fairly detailed questionnaire pertaining to artists perceptions concerning PACOFS and drama in the Free State was completed by this researcher recently and the results rendered chiefly an opinion (perception) on the part of respondents that less professional work originates in the Free State post restructuring of PACOFs as a supporter of local drama work by especially local artists is called into question.

Other more general responses to Free State Drama, from discussions with artists render the following:

What in the opinion of artists is at the root of the problem with professional drama since the closure of the PACOFS drama department? It must be stated that the PACOFS drama department represented the only professional company of actors in the Free State prior to the restructuring of PACOFS in 1996.

Subsequently attempts have been made by Free State resident professionals to form companies, but none of these have managed to produce work consistently. It should be stated here though that the Free State Drama Company, FACTS has managed, not only to secure funding, but to produce an impressive season of work with the funding secured. A full report of a year of FACTS Drama work appears later in this dissertation and provides a useful comparator for not only the former PACOFS Drama Company, but also its own privatized company, Free State Ensemble.

The major reason cited by artists for frustration in their work is, of course, funding. Professional artists express frustration about the fact (perception) that PACOFS still receives quite a big subsidy but that very little money is available through the NAC for project funding for professional drama productions in the Free State. In addition, reports of corruption and misappropriation of funds within the National Arts Council and the PACS have further contributed to a lack of faith in the potential for the availability of funding on the part of artists.

Anthony Ackerman sums it up quite well in a recent interview in SA Theatre Journal:

"The problem is that none of the former theatre complexes that housed the performing arts councils receive money for productions. The National Arts Council does have some little money to fund projects, but the funding is woefully inadequate. And recently there have been allegations of improper conduct by those running the arts council. Currently an investigation and an audit are being conducted and bodies representing the interests of performing artists, such as PANSA - Performing Arts Network of South Africa- are calling for the chairman to be suspended. It's a sorry sight to see former comrades misappropriating funding, but it's also sad inasmuch as no funding proposals are being considered while this investigation is going on"

(Ackerman in Salter, 2004: 275).

14. Conclusion

The closure of the PACOFS Drama department in 1996, in accordance with the stipulations of the White Paper on Arts and Culture saw the establishment of a privatized Drama Company (members of the former PACOFS Drama department) called the Free State Ensemble resident at the Observatory Theatre in Bloemfontein. This small Company of Professional Actors, sought to provide a Professional platform for resident Professional Actors, as well as for artists outside of the borders of the Free State who would wish to stage their work in the Free State. Since the Free State Ensemble ceased its activities in 2003, was the only real platform for Professional Drama work in the Free State once again PACOFS?

The recent establishment of the private Companies FACTS, ASPRIS and V-Productions would seem to indicate an alternative, but these companies still require a professional platform for their work and whilst the professional platforms provided by festivals do provide an alternative option for artists other than the city theatres managed by PACOFS, PACOFS is still viewed by artists as having a responsibility toward supporting local drama work.

The festivals, Volksblad Kunstefees and Macufe occur once annually, and as mentioned, in the absence of feasible voice over film or television work in the province, artists perceive the synergy between securing NAC funding for projects and approaching PACOFS to facilitate projects as a viable option for filling the work gaps. Artist still generally concede that outside of festivals, there is little or no professional work to be secured in the Free State.

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This situation (as perceived by artists) provides for the Free State being in a fairly unique position as compared to the other provinces in South Africa. Firstly, since PACOFS is no longer a production house, PACOFS is unable to fund or produce drama work locally. Although PACOFS is able to, and does assist artists with resources including rehearsal space, technical resources and expertise etc., PACOFS is unable to assist directly in the production of local work.

Secondly, since none of the major cities in the Free State are able to offer professional actors any other avenues of employment other than theater (i.e. Television, Radio, corporate and Industrial projects, educational drama etc.), the province offers no attraction for artists to live and produce work in the Free State. It could therefore be assumed that any professional artist working in the Free State would be staging a production as part of a National touring programme or as a production brought in or bought and hosted by PACOFS.

The single most pressing concern for the majority of professional theatre companies, is to find ways of keeping the most talented professional artists in the theatre. A clear pattern of artists moving away from theatre has been happening for some time - in the words of Sharleen Surtie Richards on National Television recently "theatre doesn't pay the bills!". As work in television and film increasingly offers compensation and celebrity that is unavailable in contemporary theatre, and as a new generation enters the arena, the need to strengthen the attractions of the theatre as a profession intensifies.

As Anthony Ackerman commented in an interview with Denis Salter:

"No actor just out of drama school gets the opportunity to hone their skills playing small roles in great plays. All they can hope for is getting a soap or landing a commercial. So there's already a generation of actors that's much less experienced than the generation before. And the same applies to directors, playwrights and designers.

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The irony is that many of our best people are working on shows like "Isidingo". These are not your regular daytime soap artists. These are Actors who have performed the classics with great acclaim. Top writers, and groundbreaking Theatre Directors" (Salter, 2001: 275).

Moreover, for the profession's mature artists - actors, writers, directors and designers - who have grown up along with the non-profit theatre in South Africa, the theatre must find a way to accommodate their changing needs and to celebrate their experience and achievement. Failing to do so, the theatre will lose them to more lucrative fields - and it is quite amazing to see the regularity of appearances by older theatre actors in soap operas today.

Nevertheless, the problem is too widespread for any one theatre to solve. And at the root of the problem is of course funding. Whilst theatre barely manages to pay artists a living wage, there seems very little to counteract the danger of theatre losing its artists.

For actors in the Free State, this seems to be at the heart of the problem surrounding producing work locally. Firstly, project funding is not easily accessible through the NAC and secondly, PACOFS helps out with rehearsal space, props and costumes and whatever assistance they are able to render short of paying salaries, but this does not put food on the table.

What then of prospective theatre practitioners? Students who are finishing their studies and looking to enter the profession? And what are their impressions as regards entering an industry which seems so uncertain?

The next chapter of this study investigates perceptions of young artists entering the professional drama arena.

15. Presentation of results of qualitative research into perceptions of artists (drama practitioners) regarding the state of Professional Drama in the Free State more than 10 years after the restructuring of PACOFS.

In this section of this dissertation results from qualitative research regarding artists perception of professional drama in the Free State and the perceived role of PACOFS will be presented. Since different research methods were used for the different groups of respondents, the results will be presented by group. The first group of artists included are a group of graduating students at the drama department of the University of the Free State. Since these artists are entering a profession in the Free State, their perceptions are relevant to this study.

15.1 Perceptions on the part of young professional actors regarding the role of the Free State Performing Arts Council as a facilitator of drama work for aspiring professional actors in the Free State.

15.1.1 Introduction

Since the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils in 1996 in accordance with the White Paper on Arts and Culture of that year, new structures are in place for artists to access funding that was previously only available to the Performing Arts Councils. In addition, the role of the Councils have changed from that of Production Houses to facilitators of theatre work. Despite the new funding channels and changed role of the Councils, many artists work with little or no use for, or real knowledge of these structures and how they work. Notably, young professionals entering the theatre profession, seem to have little or no regard for these structures whatsoever.

15.1.2 Problem statement and objectives

The problem statement for the purpose of this research chapter relates to the question of perceptions on the part of professional actors regarding the role of the Free State Performing Arts Council as a facilitator of drama work for aspiring professional actors in the Free State. The "problem" may be defined as: "Performing Arts Councils (PAC's) have always represented for professional performing artists a platform for the presentation of work and as such are therefore a facilitator of employment opportunities if not employers in themselves" (Eichbaum 1996: 3).

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Indeed the Performing Arts Councils were established to provide “secure professional habitats for (performing) artists ” (Republic of South Africa Government Information Service 1969: 35).

The Performing Arts Councils have, however, been restructured since 1996 and this restructuring has had far reaching consequences for performing artists. A new form of access to PAC facilities and services has been imposed by the White Paper on Arts and Culture (1996).

The hypothesis is that professional artists do not view the PAC’s in the same way professional actors did pre-1996. If they have a different view of the role of the PAC, what is it and what, if any, expectations of the local PAC do they have?

Since the researcher has embarked on a research project concerned with the Performing Arts Council in the Free State and its role in local drama, the probe undertaken here seeks to investigate these questions by means of a focused group interview. The chapter seeks to document the perceptions of final year drama students regarding the operating procedures within the Free State Performing Arts Council and its role in their professional careers.

15.1.3 Method of Research

Five aspiring professional actors have been identified to participate in a focused group discussion on the grounds of their final year status as individuals completing academic careers and embarking upon professional careers. Participants are therefore in a unique position to provide insight into expectations regarding career advancement opportunities within their chosen field of work.

Questions were directed by the researcher to the group regarding perceptions mentioned above. Notes are taken and a tape recording made of responses in order to compare, collate, document, analyze and annotate perceptions.

15.1.4 Presentation of Facts

An introduction and background to the problem statement and objectives provide a context within which the research may be viewed. The rationale behind implementing a focused group interview, its nature and advantages for the purpose of this project will be examined and described.

A selective transcription of the interview and findings presented with comment on the conducting of a focused group interview and evaluation thereof as a research tool for the purpose of this specific probe is provided. The most important findings and conclusions drawn from this specific probe are provided.

15.1.5 Historical Background and context for the research

Although historical background pertaining to PACOFS and its restructuring appears elsewhere in this dissertation, the researcher finds it useful to reiterate the major historical cornerstones and how this may have affected drama students.

In 1996 the South African government's White Paper on Arts, Culture and heritage was published which led to the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa.

One of the immediate effects of its implementation was the closing of arts departments within the Performing Arts Councils. For drama departments this meant that resident actors in the so called "permanent companies" were retrenched and administrative staff paid off with severance packages.

The old drama departments within the PACs (Performing Arts Councils) utilized their resident companies of actors for the production of new works by new playwrights and directors and for the presentation of older and ever popular works from comedy to Shakespeare. In addition, these artists were involved in many community arts projects from schools and library programs to programs promoting healthcare and literacy.

Such work was undertaken in consultation and with support from relevant local government bodies like the Departments of Health and Education.

Other work undertaken by the drama departments included the buying in of works by artists other than the resident actors, hosting of productions from other PACs as well as private theatre companies.

Much of this work was undertaken by younger professional actors either from within the ranks of the permanent company or employed ad-hoc for the specific purpose. Apart from the resident company a large base of ad-hoc actors were employed from time to time as production requirements dictated. All of this work was overseen and administered by an artistic director with a staff usually comprising of a manager, a secretary and a company manager.

This Performing Arts Council Drama department structure presented young artists with a platform towards which to aspire and ultimately find employment on a permanent or non-permanent basis. Artistic Directors of all four provincial Councils attended audition programs for final year students at drama departments of all the country's major universities or technical tertiary institutions.

This presented a means for young professionals to have their work noticed by producers of drama in the various provinces and to secure permanent or free lance work through the Performing Arts Councils.

Under the provisions of the White Paper the closure of drama departments were intended to make provision for the establishment of a National Arts Council which would receive public funds formerly granted to drama departments and to distribute grants to artists, cultural institutions, NGO's and community based organizations. Theatre complexes originally intended to host in-house productions would be core funded and staffed. Eichbaum (1996: 6) describes the White Paper as a "concept of turning the Arts Councils into theatre landlords and of making artistic companies responsible for raising their own funding".

The White Paper's objective was to provide accessibility to the Arts Councils by means of :

"The PAC's will receive declining subsidies from central government as transfer payments over the

next three years. At the end of this period, government will subsidize the core infrastructure, core staff and essential activities of the PAC's. All other allocations will be funded through the National Arts Council. This will require them to diversify their funding base as well as to restructure their ticketing policies. Additionally, the companies associated with performing arts councils, like all other performing arts organizations, will be able to apply to the National Arts Council for grants-in-aid. This shift in funding signals the transformation of PAC's from virtually free-standing production houses to becoming infrastructure accessible to all.

This process of change will be complete by the year 2000, and will be assisted by the resources of the NAC and Ministry.”

(White Paper on Arts and Culture 1996).

15.1.6 Necessity of the Research and Research questions

Since all the work previously done by resident actors in the permanent drama company of the old PACOFS would now obviously be assumed by actors who apply to the NAC for funding of specific projects and then make use of PACOFS as a facilitator of the project (if the White Paper is to be understood correctly), the question must be whether or not this is indeed the case, and if so, if the restructuring of PACOFS has had a beneficial effect on this work.

Questions pertaining to whether or not artists are successful in obtaining funding for projects or alternatively how artists are remunerated by PACOFS directly and how accessible PACOFS is to these artists in terms of facilitating projects will form the basis of the problem statement for the purpose of this research.

A poignant starting point for the examination of the effect of restructuring on professional theatre must surely be the point at which young professionals enter a profession.

This specific probe aims to question what role PACOFS is currently perceived to play in the career planning of final year drama students and to what extent PACOFS is viewed as a viable host or facilitator of drama work by these aspiring young professional actors.

The problem statement and objectives can be extended to include whether or not young aspiring artists are aware of existing channels for utilization of PACOFS, accessing funding through the NAC and the whole concept of producing drama work within current existing infrastructure.

Questions pertaining to the efficacy (or perceived efficacy) of the infrastructure within the province and the ability of these structures to provide a secure basis for artists to produce work within the province will be posed.

15.1.7 Rationale for selection of research method : Focused group discussion (FGD)

Schensul (1999) lists a number of useful applications for focused group interviews of which two appeal most to this researcher for the purpose of this study : orientation in terms of a new field of study and the generation of hypotheses based on participant's responses provide a suitable vehicle or method for an exploration of the problem statement. In addition, what the researcher requires here is lively interactive discussion to produce as clear a picture of respondent's perceptions as possible.

This seems to be exactly what Hardon (1995) contends. Of particular interest to the researcher in this study, particularly in the broader context of research pertaining to the effect of restructuring of the PAC's on Free State drama, is the use of this method to test the hypothesis that young actors do not feel any connection with the performing arts council.

Hardon (1995) commends the use of the FGD for testing hypotheses, but warns against its isolated use in forming conclusions or producing generalized results and should be used in conjunction with other methods. Should controversial or sensitive issues arise the FGD provides a means of sharing these ideas (Hardon 1995).

The greatest advantage, however, seems to be the amount of information one is able to gather in a relatively short space of time. Given the problem statement, it should be interesting to see how responses differ between individuals and to analyze these against each other Schensul (1999). Hardon (1995) contends that the cost efficacy and adaptability renders the gained information richer than would be possible with other research methods and this seems to render this method ideal for the purpose described here.

15.1.8 Summary of Research Selection Rationale

The researcher has opted here for the formal focused group interview since the nature of the research question seems to require somewhat more structured and focused response than could arise from an informal group discussion. In keeping with recommendations made by Schensul and Hardon regarding the structuring of a formal focused group interview, participants will be identified prior to the discussion, a minimum number selected (between five and fifteen) Schensul (1999). In this case five, and the participants will be asked to respond to a previously determined set of questions.

15.1.9 Date and Circumstances surrounding the interview

The focused group discussion was scheduled for Friday the 5th of September 2003 at the drama department of the University of the Free State. All participants had been contacted in advance and expressed a willingness to participate. No information was given regarding the nature and content of the interview to any respondents.

15.1.10 Biographical data pertaining to participants

All participants are final year (3rd year) students at the drama department of the University of the Free State. The participants are all more or less of the same age. They were : Suzanne Rosouw, Mariaan Kruger, Anè van der Vyver and J.P. du Plessis.

The fifth participant (Gustav Gerdener), was unable to participate as he had an emergency operation the previous day. The group was therefore limited to four participants. The balance of male / female respondents was compromised by Gustav not attending.

Method of presentation of responses :

Since this research chapter wishes to elicit a qualitative impression of perceptions of young artists, the questions, general statements of participants are provided in order to provide the reader of this research chapter with a qualitative impression.

15.1.11 Questions, General Statements and responses of participants

Researcher: You have just completed your studies. What do you regard as being job opportunities for you at this stage? Where would you go and look for work now?

Anè makes a joke about finding work in doctors rooms – tongue in cheek because the researcher is a medical representative – but the immediate response albeit jokingly is that there is not work to be found in local theatre. JP does not think the “Johannesburg ding” meaning the free-lance thing in Johannesburg, finding an agent and entering the free lance market is viable. Anè interjects that there are “onderwys” opportunities meaning private drama classes, but JP interrupts to say yes, there is that but that it comes down to “jy moet vir jousef skep”. The immediate perception therefore is that you are on your own. “Jy moet jou eie ding doen die hele tyd ... later eers as jy gevestig is kan jy miskien dink om ‘n agent te kry”. Anè and Suzanne agree.

Researcher asks if everyone agrees. They do.

The researcher asks where they would take the work they have produced themselves, this “self-skepping” and asks what they regard as a viable platform for the presentation of this work.

JP immediately says schools, which is interesting since theatres are not even considered as a first choice for the presentation of work. He says it depends what you are trying to say with your piece of work but that schools, churches even street performances are initial platforms and that you could try to enter the work for acceptance by Festivals after you have tested the success of your piece at these other platforms.

The researcher asks whether they would consider these viable platforms if they were marketing a new play that was self written or whether these platforms related more to schools programs and work specific to schools. What would they do with a more contemporary drama piece?

Mariaan says they would approach the university’s drama department first “ons kom grovel maar hier by die departement vir ‘n slot”, says maybe PACOFS but she immediately says that this probably would not be successful but that one should try all options. JP and Suzanne both agree that

everything can be tried. Mariaan says “hulle sit eintlik maar met die geld” meaning PACOFS. JP says you can always ask “wat is hierdie mense?” the Arts Councils “vir geld smeek” or sponsorships – “die grootste faktor is seker maar die geld” before you can think of taking a play to a festival, but if you had money a festival would provide a platform - if they could get in.

Researcher says that if they can get in implies that they would apply – are they comfortable to apply? Do they know how to go about it?

They all seem to know how to go about getting a play to a festival. JP feels that the criteria for selection of plays at festivals is at times stringent, that popularity plays a big part and that whether a piece by a young unknown group would be accepted is “debateerbaar” They make a joke about some play – obviously a line from a play they have done.

Researcher says it sounds like they have experience of Festivals have they produced work for festivals before?

Not alone says Suzanne. Mariaan says while they studied the department wrote plays in and they have performed at festivals they have contact through the department. They would consider festivals as the biggest viable platform for work.

Does it bother them that this would take their work out of the Free State ? Does being an actor in Bloemfontein or in the Free State have a feeling for them.

Anè says you must get out of the Free State as soon as possible (joke) – Mariaan says the sentiment is nice but “die lojaliteit gaan jou niks baat nie.

JP thinks there is a need for drama in the Free State and touring companies have a role to play – he would like to be part of a Free State touring company.

Mariaan, Suzanne and Anè think you should go where the work takes you and don't feel particularly loyal to Free State drama.

Researcher asks if there was the possibility of being part of a resident Free State company and producing work which toured and was artistically satisfying with a regular, if small income, if that would be preferable to producing work for festivals and trying to get it accepted?

Everyone is in immediate agreement and also feel that such a company would inspire a greater feeling for their role in Free State drama. Anè wants to know if the researcher has a plan for such a company. On the subject of festivals, the researcher asks what their perceptions are about MACUFE, the local arts festival. Mariaan says it is definitely not a viable platform for actors – JP says more for jazz. Anè says they don't feel included, Mariaan says they don't know about how to include work in the festival – don't know who organises it – don't really feel "tuis" about it. Suzanne says it doesn't cater for actors – they have had shows included in the festival, only to have them cancelled. JP says it is poorly organised and poorly attended. Not a viable platform. JP is actually quite upset about the poor planning even as a spectator because he missed opportunities to see shows he would have like to have seen.

Researcher asks who he is cross with – is MACUFE connected in their minds to some specific organiser? Do they assume that MACUFE is connected with PACOFS?

JP says PACOFS is "die kern van Bloemfontein teater, is dit nie?" They all laugh. They make jokes about PACOFS being the pulse of theatre. They perceive PACOFS and its association with MACUFE as another waste of money that could have been better spent? Mariaan says "lets not go there – or have we already gone there?" Researcher says we can go there by all means.

JP says there is a need for better marketing of theatre by PACOFS. Ons "vermoed daar is genoeg geld by PACOFS" for better marketing. Perceive PACOFS as spending a lot of money on productions they buy in – do not market the productions adequately and lose (waste) a lot of money. They understand that central government gives money to PACOFS and that artists should apply to PACOFS for a share of these funds – Mariaan says they tried this but were told that PACOFS did not have any such funds.

What do they understand PACOFS role to be?

Nobody is quite sure. Anè says they are the basic company in the Free State, they receive money, they buy shows.

Researcher asks if they feel they have any connection with PACOFS as actors -do they feel comfortable to approach them?

Anè says “glad nie” Everybody else agrees.

Would they approach PACOFS to use facilities eg. for rehearsal?

JP says if they have bought a production from you he would. They have had a production hosted by PACOFS but it was badly attended. They argue about the number of audiences per night. The marketing done by PACOFS is sub standard according to Mariaan. They don't think PACOFS understands theatre and have no confidence in organizational abilities of PACOFS and feel this would stand in the way of their seeking a bond with PACOFS – but Mariaan feels they have no choice they have to approach PACOFS because they have the money.

What do they understand as PACOFS' role in Free State drama?

Suzanne says “hulle is die mense met die geld”. JP says PACOFS should be promoting Free State drama, they have the money to do so, but he doesn't think they do. “Ons kan baie uitlatings maak oor PACOFS” (negative). JP says the show they did for PACOFS they had to rehearse in the cafeteria when there are supposed to be facilities at least for rehearsal. Suzanne says she remembers when PACOFS was an exciting vibrant place with much happening. She asks “Wat het gebeur?”

The production of *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* which was bought from the university by PACOFS in which they played had to rehearse in a cafeteria, the theatre setup was poorly done, costumes etc. weren't supplied. JP says they expected a more professional approach. Anè says there were tea parties in other venues which is why they could not rehearse and they were crammed into the cafeteria with other artists (a mass choir). JP describes the general perception they have of PACOFS as “deurmekaarspul” (he swears) “dis maar vaag wat hulle rol is”.

Do they think this treatment was because they were students – do they think other artists are also treated this way? Suzanne says maybe professional artists have their own organizers and are treated better.

Do they regard PACOFS in any way as having a role to play in providing some work related function for them.

Anè says she would rather take a production and tour with it than present it to PACOFS. JP says if PACOFS buys a production outright that he would consider it.

Researcher asks about what they perceive as PACOFS' responsibility in terms of community theatre projects?

They don't know that PACOFS had or should have such a responsibility. Suzanne remembers the marionette educational performances at school and the children's theatre from the past but none of the others remember or are aware of any other function that PACOFS has as a presenter of community theatre projects.

Would they consider approaching PACOFS with their own structured community theatre projects (because they perceive PACOFS to have money for this purpose) and do they think that PACOFS would consider such a project on the grounds of its being community orientated? Would this present a viable opportunity for a working relationship with PACOFS.

Nobody in the group has ever considered such an avenue. JP says his belief in their general ability to host or produce anything would prevent him from approaching PACOFS – he would undertake such a project independently. Anè would also do it on her own. Nobody regards PACOFS as having any social / community responsibility anyway. Mariaan says that is aware of drama classes that are presented to children by PACOFS but is not sure where and by whom.

What attention would they give PACOFs in their general career planning.

Generally consensus that they would not give PACOFS any thought.

15.1.12 General impressions

The researcher concludes that the formal focused group discussion is very effective in obtaining a

wide range of opinions on certain issues. Of interest was also the intensity of some responses which one would not expect and an almost complacency over other issues one would expect to elicit a stronger response. An example is where the group became quite upset over missed opportunities to attend local festival performances as audience members because of poor publicity, but seemed somewhat complacent generally over the apparent lack of job opportunities facing them in their chosen profession. In terms of the question pertaining what role PACOFS is currently perceived to play in the career planning of final year drama students and to what extent PACOFS is viewed as a viable host or facilitator of drama work by these aspiring young professional actors, one could conclude quite positively that these respondents do not regard the Performing Arts Council of the Free State as any kind of role-player in their own perceived role in the profession.

15.1.13 Researcher's response to the research method

The researcher found the focus group interview to be an excellent vehicle for generating hypotheses and questions as new questions presented themselves from the participant's responses.

However, the researcher did find certain problems to which Hardon (1995) refers and may be summarised as:

J.P. was certainly a dominant participant and would often lead other respondents to agreement with his responses.

Many of the questions elicited responses as to what the participants thought PACOFS "should" do rather than what they perceive PACOFS to be doing or what their own specific preference would be. Upon listening to the Audio recording the researcher noted that he certainly affected responses by favourable reaction to certain responses and some questions were formulated spontaneously to lead the participants to specific responses. This raises a question about whether or not these responses would have been elicited if the questions were less pointed.

For the purposes of a Master's degree research project, the researcher finds the method fascinating and useful for the purpose of testing hypotheses related to the chosen field of study.

15.1.14 Research Conclusions

In this research project use was made of a formal group discussion (FGD) for the purpose of

finding what role PACOFS is currently perceived to play in the career planning of final year drama students and to what extent PACOFS is viewed as a viable host or facilitator of drama work by these aspiring young professional actors and to evaluate the FGD as a research method.

The most important findings can be summarized as:

- Final year drama students do not view the Performing Arts Council as playing a role in their planned careers
- Festivals are seen as a more viable platform for presenting work than performing arts councils
- Young professional actors see themselves very much as “out on their own”, having to produce own work, find own funding and fend for themselves in the industry
- Perceptions about the proficiency of PACOFS and its role in Free State drama are generally negative
- The lack of basic trust in the ability of PACOFS to play a meaningful role in work creation and support renders it an unviable platform for the presentation of their work
- Focused group interviews are an exciting, vibrant and lively way of determining perceptions and testing hypotheses but do have inherent problems as a research method, but that refining one’s skill as a facilitator of such discussion renders interesting and sometimes startling results!

15. 1.15 OVERVIEW OF DISCUSSION: QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Summary of questions asked and responses drawn

The following summary of main questions and responses is intended to provide a more concise impression of responses in view of compliance with addressing the problem statement and objectives set out in 14.1.2.

You have basically just completed your studies...what do you regard as being job opportunities for you at this stage... where would you go and look for work now?

They don't sound very sure, but do not identify theatres or traditional formal drama infrastructure as an immediate choice.

The researcher asks where they would take the work they have produced themselves, this "self-skepping" and asks what they regard as a viable platform for the presentation of this work.

They identify schools, churches even street theatre, but not local theatres or drama companies.

The researcher asks whether they would consider these viable platforms if they were marketing a new play that was self written or whether these platforms related more to schools programs and work specific to schools. What would they do with a more contemporary drama piece.

They identify festivals as a viable platform but do not sound sure of being accepted.

Researcher says that if they can get in implies that they would apply – are they comfortable to apply? Do they know how to go about it?

They seem to know how to go about applying and getting organized for a festival.

Researcher says it sounds like they have experience of Festivals have they produced work for festivals before?

Yes they have festival experience through the drama department.

Does it bother them that this would take their work out of the Free State? Does being an actor in Bloemfontein or in the Free State hold a certain Provincial loyalty for them?

If work can be obtained elsewhere loyalty to Free State drama would not be an issue.

Researcher asks if there was the possibility of being part of a resident Free State company and producing work which toured and was artistically satisfying with a regular, if small income, if that would be preferable to producing work for festivals and trying to get it accepted?

They all would certainly prefer such an option.

On the subject of festivals, the researcher asks what their perceptions are about MACUFE, the local arts festival.

They do not know much about it but their perceptions are generally negative in terms of it being a viable platform.

Is MACUFE connected in their minds to some specific organizer?

They sound unsure at first, but then identify PACOFS.

They perceive PACOFS and its association with MACUFE as another waste of money that could have been better spent?

Yes, they all generally agree on this.

Researcher asks if they feel they have any connection with PACOFS as actors. Do they feel comfortable to approach them?

Response is that they most certainly do not feel any connection nor are they comfortable.

What do they understand as PACOFS' role in Free State drama.

They sound unsure but think it should be to promote local drama but are not doing this satisfactorily.

Researcher asks about what they perceive as PACOFS' responsibility in terms of community theatre projects?

They don't know that PACOFS had or should have such a responsibility.

What attention would they give PACOFS in their general career planning?

Generally consensus that they would not give PACOFS any thought.

16. The transformed PACOFS as Playhouse and facilitator – what facilities does the PACOFS playhouse offer artists?

In this part of the dissertation, the researcher undertakes an investigation into the facilities of the transformed PACOFS Playhouse. The facilities were demonstrated to the researcher as part of a guided tour of some of the facilities by the then CEO of PACOFS Dr. Nathan Bagarette. Facilities are described and in cases where it appears the use thereof differs today from what it did pre-transformation, the differences in their utilization are described.

Purpose of the Report

Since the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils in 1996 in accordance with the White Paper on Arts and Culture of that year, new structures are in place for artists to access facilities provided by the State assets which are the structures of the PACs that were previously only available to Artists within the Performing Arts Councils. In addition, the role of the Councils have changed from that of Production Houses to facilitators of theatre work. Despite the new access possible through the changed role of the Councils, many artists work with little or no use for, or real knowledge of these structures and how they work. Notably, young professionals entering the theatre profession, seem to have little or no regard for these structures whatsoever. This finding is confirmed by artist perceptions, discussed later in this dissertation.

In order to better understand the “playhouse” concept and the role of PACOFS as a facilitator, the researcher investigates the PACOFS Playhouse:

The Sand du Plessis Theatre Complex

The Sand du Plessis Theatre Complex opened its doors to the public on the 1st of August 1985. Lavish and supplied with the best technical equipment in the field of theatre it was at the time “the most technically proficient and modern theatre complex in the Southern Hemisphere”

(PACOFS ANNUAL REPORT, 2006).

The Sand du Plessis Theatre Complex pre- transformation (1996) :

Within the old PACOFS the Sand du Plessis was home to predominantly Opera, Ballet, Music and Musical Theatre and the Symphony, but larger Drama productions could also be accommodated, although the Andre Huguenet Theater was the home of Drama. The annual programme for the Sand was largely determined by the Management of Opera, Music and Musical Theatre.

Compared to the transformed Sand du Plessis "Playhouse" :

It (Sand du Plessis Theatre complex) offers its numerous venues and ultra modern facilities to promoters and organizers for conferences, seminars, conventions and other functions. The Sand du Plessis Theatre Complex has emerged as Bloemfontein's most prestigious conference and function centre. It offers a fully licensed catering service, air-conditioned comfort, a modern theatre, as well as all facilities that are necessary for staging virtually any event.

(PACOFS ANNUAL REPORT, 2006)

Bloemfontein, being the most centrally located city in South Africa, has long been a favourite place for conferences and meetings of all kinds. Situated in the heart of Bloemfontein, the Sand du Plessis Theatre Complex is on the doorstep of the main shopping area, banks and other business outlets. The complex is easily accessible from hotels, national roads, airport terminals and the railway station.

(PACOFS BROCHURE, 2006).

The focus shift is obvious from the above : Opera house has given way to a most prestigious conference and function centre.

The Sand du Plessis Theatre as Opera House

The Auditorium

The venue was designed as a multi-purpose theatre for Bloemfontein. With an enormous seating capacity, this magnificent theatre although ideally suited to Opera and Orchestra, is also well suited to staging drama requiring larger sets and more lavish productions.

The auditorium of the Sand du Plessis Theatre is unique in South African theatre architectural design. Provided with continental seating (no centre aisle), and separate entrances for various rows, the auditorium has no distinct balcony but is divided into four staggered seating areas, each giving its occupants a sense of intimate surroundings, while together (viewed from the stage) giving the impression of space and majesty. The auditorium has 964 seats, distributed as follows:

Stalls : 453
Orchestra pit (Removed when the pit is in use) : 50
Balcony : 455
Spare : 6
Total : 964

For smaller productions, the auditorium can be subdivided by hanging a curtain, which decreases the number of seats to approximately 450.

The walls of the auditorium are covered with acoustically designed embuia panels, which, as part of their acoustic function, imbue the space with warmth and visual interest. The colours of the wooden material covering the seats, the vinyl floor covering and the main stage curtain, have been chosen to blend with the embuia panels. Together they create an interesting visual effect.

(PACOFS BROCHURE, 2006).

The focus of this study is, and has been thus far Drama, and not Opera, Music or Ballet to which a theatre like the Sand du Plessis complex is extremely well suited. It must, however be mentioned that collaboration between the former PACOFS Drama and other departments like Opera within the old PACOFS structure, often saw members of the PACOFS Drama Department in acting roles on the Sand Stage in Musicals and Operas. The researcher of this paper's own professional career started in this way on the Sand du Plessis stage in a production of "Fiddler on the Roof". This musical, staged by the Opera Department at PACOFS and directed by the late David Matheson employed the researcher in an acting, non-singing role.

Situated in the ceiling are the usual light bridges and follow spot galleries. In the wall panels and above the proscenium are loudspeakers for sound effects, amplification and cinema sound. The theatre is equipped with the latest sound equipment.

The Stage Area

The stage is designed as a stereotype cross stage, with wing and rear stage areas serving the central performance area, and a forestage which, by means of the raising or lowering of its four lights, can also serve as an orchestra pit seating up to 100 musicians, or, at auditorium floor level, to seat 50 theatre-goers. Speed and ease of scene changes were a priority in the design of the stage and to this end, it is equipped with a 15m x 15m moveable stage lift divided into five independent stage lifts of 3m x 15m each. These five double-floor stage lifts can be used singly or coupled in groups of two to five and can move to any level from 3,9m above the stage to 4,4m below stage level. The main floor of each lift can be raked to a maximum slope of 7 degrees. Coupled together they can provide a raked playing area with an incline of 5,6 degrees.

Five side-stage wagons can be moved across, up and downstage independently or together. These stages are electro--mechanically propelled by power in the grooved stage, obviating the need for trailing cables and are controlled from the main computerized mechanist's desk above the stage.

The single backstage wagon, housing a double revolve, can be moved downstage and lowered on the five coupled stage lifts, thereby creating the main revolving stage. The revolving stage is unique in that in that it requires no drive motors, but forms its own magnetic field, ensuring noiseless operation.

All stage wagons can be lowered to a level of 3,9m below stage level for storage. The side and back stages may be cut off from the main playing area by means of sound barriers similar to the iron fire curtain separating the stage from the auditorium. When the rear sound barrier is raised, a 45 square metre deep playing area is created.

The 11-story high tower above the stage ranks amongst the highest in the world and is the highest in South Africa. This also contributes to facilitate the scene changing, as well as providing storage space for flown scenery necessary during a repertoire season. Fifty nine electro-mechanically operated stage decor battens in the backstage area are provided to cover all production requirements.

By setting up a specially designed acoustic shell on the downstage area, the theatre may be transformed into a concert hall. The acoustic shell prevents sound from disappearing into the side stage and stage tower. Adjustable reflectors above the sides of the orchestra pit reflect sound into the auditorium very successfully.

Dressing Rooms

Traditionally, while the public areas of theatres world-wide have been spectacular and luxurious, the facilities for the performers tended to be minimal, if not totally non-existent. This situation has been remedied in the newest South African theatres and it might be said to have reached its zenith in the Sand du Plessis Theatre.

The dressing rooms are the finest in the country and are situated on three floors immediately alongside the stage. There are 26 dressing rooms for 78 artists, which can be supplemented by using dressing rooms in the interleaving rehearsal block.

The six star suites (there are three) each have private bathrooms, as well as lounges equipped with closed-circuit television. The remaining dressing rooms have toilet and shower facilities as well as adjustable air-conditioning units. A green room with kitchen and toilet facilities is situated on each floor. Other facilities on these floors include: two saunas, a large make-up room, and a hairdressing salon.

The Andre Huguenet Theatre : Home of Drama

Andre Huguenet pre-transformation :

The Andre was always known as the Drama Theatre and was used by the old PACOFS Drama extensively but not exclusively. Theatres used regularly included the Civic Theatre and the Observatory Theatre.

The Andre Huguenet in the PACOFS Playhouse structure :

The main foyer, decorated economically but attractively, contains toilets as well as refreshment

facilities, and provides direct access into the auditorium. The gallery houses a permanent exhibition of photographs of the late Andre Huguenet, the remains of his own private collection, including the only color photograph ever taken of this great son of the Free State. Beneath the main foyer is a refreshment room for use by the public or for private parties.

(PACOFBS BROCHURE, 2006)

The Auditorium and Stage

Measuring 21m x 39m, this large space is adaptable to virtually any configuration of seating or of acting area. Blocks of portable seating can be moved to any position from the conventional proscenium arch arrangement to an "in-the-round" shape. The space is devisable into two equal parts by means of acoustic screens. This facility may be used to create a conventional auditorium and stage or an intimate space seating 100 people. The full seating capacity of the room is 300. The mobile stage is completely adjustable. This theatre will provide a home for any drama company.

(PACOFBS BROCHURE, 2006)

Equipment

The theatre is provided with 19 hand-winch operated electro-mechanical decor battens and 6 lighting barrels. A computerized lighting control system, similar to that in use in the Sand du Plessis Theatre, and sound control equipment have been installed for theatrical productions. The Andre Huguenet Theatre is also equipped to serve as a fully operative television studio

Dressing Rooms

Six dressing rooms, each with its own toilet and shower facilities, are available for approximately 66 performers. These are rated as two star dressing rooms. Saunas for use by artists appearing in both theatres have been installed in this area and definitely mark a first in South African Theatres.

Andre Offices

Office space for up to 8 resident or visiting technicians and / or administration staff is situated close to the dressing rooms.

CAPACITY OF THE ANDRE HUGUENET THEATRE

Maximum seating 303

Minimum seating 96

Floor space 800m²

Dimensions 21m x 39m

(PACOFS BROCHURE, 2006)

Rehearsal Space

The rehearsal block is conveniently situated on the same level as the stages of the Sand du Plessis and the Andre Huguenet Theatres, besides studios 3 and 4 that are located on level two. The rehearsal block comprises four rehearsal studios. One with a sprung floor for ballet, two small rehearsal rooms measuring 18m x 10,5m each, a choir rehearsal room, an orchestra rehearsal room and six warm-up rooms for singers and musicians. The choir and orchestra rehearsal rooms are both fully equipped for use as sound recording studios. All passages and doors in this area have been planned to allow for scenery to be set-up in the rehearsal rooms for "on set" rehearsals. This cuts out unnecessary rehearsal time on stage, which then makes the theatre available for productive use. These venues can also be used for other purposes.

(PACOFS BROCHURE, 2006)

A discussion of the utilization of rehearsal space is relevant to this study as rehearsal space is a facility which PACOFS is obliged to avail to artists wishing to utilize this space according to the stipulations surrounding its transformation mandate.

Studio 1 & 2

Old PACOFS Drama :

Studio 1 and 2 were the two main rehearsal rooms for the drama department. With the high ceilings and large floor space, the studios allowed for virtually any size production to be accommodated, including décor prior to theatre move-in.

Studio 1 and 2 today :

Comfortable seating for 250 people. Ideally suited for smaller meetings, conferences and demonstrations.

The Workshop Theatre

A new theatre with an industrial look, situated at the side of the PACOFs building for easy access to the main road and parking area.

Artistic policy : Industrial theatre productions, developmental and experimental theatre, poetry sessions, rock / youth music events.

Other uses : Informal meetings

Capacity Theatre style: 200

Workshop , Set Building and Props

The workshop is situated at stage level to facilitate the easy movement of sets from the workshop to the stage. Workshops for metal work, props, painting and woodwork exist. The stores that supply the workshop are located beneath the main workshop. Props, furniture and backdrops from various ex-productions are for hire.

Costumes

Thousands of ex-production costumes, as well as some especially made for hiring purposes. This department also creates and maintains :

Wigs, millinery, costume arts, masks, jewellery, shoes and hats.

This department can also be contacted to design and make costumes for specific events /productions (PACOFs BROCHURE, 2006).

Stage, Sound and Lighting

PACOFs can provide stages, sound systems and lighting to comply with indoor as well as outdoor functions with **professional, trained technicians** for all sound and lighting requirements, all for hire at competitive rates.

Technical Support

The following departments fall under Technical Support:

Maintenance,
Stage Services,
Workshops,
Security,
Wardrobe,
Cleaning Services,
Transport.

These departments manage and maintain the Sand du Plessis Theatre Complex, which includes the André Huguenet Theatre.

Successful theatre management relies strongly on the liaison between all the departments that make up Technical and Support Services. The one cannot function without the other and only by working together closely, can theatre productions be brought to the stage successfully.

Theatre Truck Hire

One mobile theatre truck, made available by Transnet, is available for hire to the public at affordable rates. It can be used for various open-air productions, auditions, promotions and meetings. This truck (horse and trailer) is fitted with a collapsible stage and sound system that can accommodate a crowd of up to 5 000 people. Additional sound can be arranged to accommodate up to 10 000 people.

16.1 Perception of Transformation from Production house to Playhouse : PACOFS CEO

In an interview the researcher conducted with Dr. Nathan Bagarette, CEO of PACOFS regarding the transformation of PACOFS and its role as Playhouse and facilitator, the following impressions emerged :

Dr Bagarette is of the opinion that successful transformation from Production House to Playhouse has transpired, as is evident from the interview and subsequent public statements to the effect.

“PACOFS has been successfully transformed from a production house to a Playhouse, providing many opportunities for other ventures. As a Playhouse we now have a dual purpose. Firstly we have to provide an environment for the artists where they can practice perform their different art forms, and secondly to provide effective services to communities and business communities who will be making use of our venues, personnel, facilities, equipment and expertise.

Our mission is to reach the widest range of audiences by presenting aesthetically accessible programmes to the benefit of all the people in South Africa and in particular, the people of our province. We will endeavor to identify, assist, develop and encourage local talent artistically in order to present excellent and outstanding global productions in the field of music, dance and theatre.

Our major advantage is that we are the largest theatre centre in the Free State and we offer a one-stop solution to almost every aspect of your requirements, i.e. from the stage design of a performing arts product, to the hosting of conferences, exhibitions, banquets, weddings, as well as renting out of sound systems, quality lighting, a mobile stage truck and much more to cater for your needs at the best possible prices. Pacofs is geared as an event management company, to provide a one stop shop facility for all types of events from Music Festivals and Concerts to Corporate events such as dinners, lunches, breakfasts, conferences, launches and other like occasions.

With a current operational staff component of 138 members we engage support consultants on a contract basis from the required relevant fields of industry as the need arises for each and every

different project to ensure expert execution and delivery to the clients. Given the nature of our company composition and noting the requirements of the government and corporate South Africa, we record that we fully subscribe to this code - but that our emphasis's is focused on quality in delivery and execution of the tasks or projects at hand.

During the 38 years of our existence we have accumulated volumes of practical knowledge. This knowledge and experience is available to any artist or member of the public who wants to make use of our services. Our highly professional, skilled and friendly staff will assist you in developing your ideas and in realising your creative vision.

We believe that we are now better positioned than ever before to work with our partners and the broader community to contribute to the growth and sustainability of a dynamic performing arts institution in our city, our province and our country as a whole.”

(PACOFS BROCHURE, 2006).

Production House to Playhouse Transformation Conclusions

The researcher concludes that all facilities and services at PACOFS, previously almost exclusively in service of productions have been transformed into multi-functional conference, banquet and exhibition facilities. From impressions described, the specialist production facilities for the purpose of Performing Arts seem largely negated in favour of events and events management for a more business and corporate market than any artistic endeavour.

17. Perceptions of transformation on the part of Artists

17.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the historical overview of the PACOFS transformation process earlier in this dissertation, the Drama Department of the Performing Arts Council of the Free State (PACOFS) represented, for many years, the Professional Drama Company in the Free State.

This department was closed down on the 30th of March 1997 as part of the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa in accordance with the stipulations of the White Paper on Arts and Culture of 1996.

COUNCILS UNREPRESENTATIVE OF ARTIST AND AFRICAN ART



DISMANTLING OF PAC RESIDENT DRAMA COMPANIES



COMPANIES APPLY TO NAC



COUNCILS FACILITATE ARTIST'S PRODUCTIONS



STRUCTURES AND COUNCILS MORE ACCESSIBLE TO MORE ARTISTS

Since virtually all drama work in the Free State Province was commissioned, produced and staged within PACOFS, the closure of the Drama department at PACOFS saw not only the exodus of the permanent company of actors from the province, but also had a significant impact on local actors who depended on the Council for a large percentage of their work.

In addition, many actors working from outside the Free State Province were drawn into productions at PACOFS.

Closure of the Drama department effectively cut off this avenue of work for these artists. Although some private professional initiatives like the Free State Theatre Acts group or FACTS have come into existence, these groups are still dependent on the constant securing of funding to initiate projects, and are unable to work permanently or consistently within the profession. The closure of the PACOFS Drama department in 1996, in accordance with the stipulations of the White Paper on Arts and Culture saw the establishment of a privatized Drama Company (members of the former PACOFS Drama department) called the Free State Ensemble resident at the Observatory Theatre in Bloemfontein.

This small company of professional actors, sought to provide a professional platform for resident professional actors, as well as for artists outside of the borders of the Free State who would wish to stage their work in the Free State. A detailed description of the first year of private work undertaken by this company is provided later in this dissertation.

Since the Free State Ensemble ceased its activities in 2003, professional drama companies like Free State Theatre Acts or FACTS, ASPRIS and most recently, V productions have come into existence but have had the presentation of meaningful consistent professional drama work hampered by a constant battle to secure funding.

This situation provides for the Free State being in a fairly unique position as compared to the other provinces in South Africa. Firstly, since PACOFS is no longer a production house, PACOFS is unable to fund or produce drama work locally. Although PACOFS is able to, and does assist artists with resources including rehearsal space, technical resources and expertise etc., PACOFS is unable to assist directly in the production of local work.

Secondly, since none of the major cities in the Free State are able to offer professional actors any other avenues of employment other than theater (i.e. Television, Radio, Corporate and Industrial projects, Educational drama etc.), the province offers no attraction for artists to live and produce work in the Free State. Most of the members of the current drama companies like FACTS, as well as individual artists resident in the Free State, are not able to support themselves financially on drama work at all, and all have other sources of income.

This research chapter proposes to provide a framework for a larger and more comprehensive research project into the state of professional drama in the Free State. Contained within this report is information pertaining to the way professional actors concerned predominantly with drama work perceive work and working in the province and what they perceive the role of PACOFS and the NAC to be in procuring, producing and presenting work in the Free State. Was more work produced within the resident company structure and attracting outside artists on a free-lance basis within the old PACOFS than is currently being facilitated by PACOFS and that more artists and other role-players in Free State drama were involved in drama in the province previously than is currently the case?

Is subsidized, national theatre with resident companies of actors more effective in producing a broader base of work than the current project funded artistic programs hosted by the NAC / PACOFS? Or is it precisely because the province is not able to offer professional actors any other avenues of work outside of theatre?

The only accurate measure of how many artists are involved in professional drama in the Free State within any given period, would be to provide a physical head count of artists involved in all forms of professional drama in the province in any given period. This investigation does not propose to do that.

Rather, this report would extend this information to include data pertaining to the profile of artists who were employed permanently and non-permanently within the old PACOFS Drama structure and their current perceptions regarding transformation of PACOFS and their current involvement with Drama work in the Free State. Although this would seem to be a quantitative rendering, the somewhat small sample size (since only artists previously involved with PACOFS are included) renders the outcomes of the report more of a qualitative than quantitative result.

A focused group interview with resident artists who were involved with the old PACOFS examines their current perceptions regarding transformation of PACOFS and their current involvement with Drama work in the Free State.

Responses to a questionnaire are analyzed to provide some qualitative views on the subject of professional drama in the province, which it is hoped, will contribute to theatre research in the Free State province for non- resident artists.

17.2 Goals of this investigation

The goals of this investigation are broadly to gain a sense of the profile of the professional actor who previously worked within the resident Drama Company in PACOFS as well as those employed ad-hoc and whether or not they now work within the province whether permanently, as Free State residents, or occasionally, as a free lance artist based outside of the province.

In terms of the goals of the investigation, two groups of artists have been identified:

- a) artists resident in the Free State who were involved in the old PACOFS Drama structures (who have partaken in a detailed questionnaire – and not those who partook in the focused group interview later in this dissertation),
- b) artists who have worked with some regularity ad-hoc or permanently in the Free State province, but do not reside in it for whom a detailed questionnaire was supplied.

The two groups are provided with a questionnaire (a somewhat different questionnaire for each group).

The goals of the investigation were broadly to investigate the following:

The profile of artists working/ likely to work in the Free State, factors playing a role in the procurement of work in the Free State, the perceived role of PACOFS in Free State drama, the perceived role of the National Arts Council in Free State Drama

17.3 Determination of sample

The sample was determined on the grounds of the investigation focusing on *professional* actors. Whilst there are a number of professionally trained theatre practitioners in the Free State who are involved in a variety of theatre related occupations including teachers, academics and technical theatre practitioners (from lighting and sound technicians to events management), the investigation wished to focus on actors who earn their daily living from working in the theatre.

Whether employed permanently, or semi-permanently (in the case of local artists or from time to time in the case of actors living and working outside of the province) the sample attempts to represent both resident and non-resident working professionals.

The sample was therefore drawn on the basis of professional working status as an actor:

- Living in the Free State and working locally, living outside of the Free State and working locally from time to time and
- Artists previously employed permanently by the old PACOFS Drama or working on an ad-hoc basis for the old PACOFS Drama Department.

Closure of the PACOFS Drama department saw an exodus of artists from the Free State to pursue work opportunities in especially Johannesburg.

The sample can therefore be divided into two broad categories :

1. Artists involved with the old PACOFS Drama Department who still reside in the Free State.
These were identified as :

Artist	Current Occupation
M de Koker	Free Lance professional actor/ Drama instructor
B Mphatseng	Free Lance professional actor/ Drama instructor
A Kamper	Arts Festival Co-ordinator
P. Taljaard	Free Lance professional actor
G. Kamper	University Lecturer : Drama and Theatre Studies

2. The following artists were involved with old PACOFS Drama as described and no longer reside or work permanently in the province :

Artist	Permanent / Ad- Hoc
I. Verwey	Permanent Company
O. Cowan	Permanent Company
L. Sebezo	Permanent Company
T Mnumzana	Ad Hoc
N Xaba	Permanent Company
A Michaels	Ad Hoc
J Botes	Ad Hoc
I Klink	Permanent Company
D Mmembe	Permanent Company
C Compion	Ad Hoc
J van Helsdingen	Ad Hoc
B Mphatseng	Ad Hoc
A Litheko	Permanent Company
P Luckhoff	Ad Hoc
J Stoop	Ad Hoc
P Brand	Permanent Company
E Marx	Ad Hoc
M du Toit	Permanent Company
S Maredi	Ad Hoc

These artists were approached via a questionnaire (APPENDIX A), sent out over a period of five years.

17.4 Clarification of concepts

For the purpose of this investigation, "theatre" or "drama" will mean drama productions, and musical theatre and not opera, dance cabaret, or music productions.

"Artist" or "actor" refers to professional theatre actors involved in drama productions to earn their livelihood and refers to both male and female.

17.5 The Nature of this Report

In order to provide for a sense of the profile of artist working in the Free State the report supplies the following basic data in graphic form:

A profile of the professional actor working in the Free State according to age, language, qualifications, experience etc.

Responses to the questions posed in the questionnaire regarding perceived roles of the NAC and PACOFS and how this affects working in the Free State province.

(Appendix A and B.)

17.6 The Research Method

The investigation was conducted with resident and non-resident Free State professional actors by means of a fairly comprehensive questionnaire sent to respondents by post and a slightly different questionnaire was supplied to non-resident respondents. Respondents were asked to complete the questionnaires and return them by mail.

No information regarding the content and nature of the interview was supplied to any of these respondents prior to the questionnaires being sent. Results from the questionnaire were analysed to reflect percentages and/or frequencies from responses and are reflected graphically.

17. Limitations and Certain Reservations

It could be argued that this investigation is hampered by the sample size. Since only ex-permanent company actors and ad-hoc artists involved with the old PACOFS Drama have been included, reservations may pertain to the findings being unrepresentative of professional drama in the province. However, the investigation seeks to determine broadly whether the transformation of PACOFS has in fact led to a greater and more representative number of artists utilizing the PAC and its current services than previously.

In accordance with the stipulations of the White Paper regarding transformation of PACs, the transformation was intended to benefit artists. The investigation undertaken here proposes to probe artists involved previously regarding their perceptions of specifically the advantages of the transformed PACOFS as facilitator versus its previous role as a production house.

The questions pertain to whether or not artists use PACOFS as a facilitator as intended by the White Paper and the rationale for closure of resident PAC Arts Departments.

Rather than interpret findings as being accurately representative of Free State professional drama, the paper is submitted as a model for further investigation into professional drama as a contribution to theatre research in the province by highlighting some of the questions pertaining to the unique situation Performing Artists find themselves in the Free State.

17.8 Interpretation of findings :

Findings are interpreted graphically. Responses from individual questions are tallied, and results rendered graphically and trends extracted.

7.8.1 General Findings

Although, as mentioned, the sample is too small to interpret these findings as representative in any way of professional drama in the Free State, some general findings may be described in order to inform the model being presented here.

There is a general consensus among the respondents to the questionnaire that the structures provided for by the NAC are under-utilized by artists and that similarly, PACOFS is neither approached nor consulted by themselves with any view to working in the Free State. This must be interpreted as a failing on the part of artists to utilize these structures rather than a failing on the part of the structures themselves.

Since very few applications to the NAC are made, it must be interpreted that artists work comfortably enough on an annual basis to require project funding from the NAC or any assistance from PACOFS. As regards a willingness to work in the Free State, most actors feel that there are insufficient job opportunities for them, but that since PACOFS is merely a facilitator and not an originator or producer of drama work in the Free State, that this cannot be construed as a failing on the part of PACOFS, but rather that resident artists need to find some way of utilizing the structures provided for in the province to produce more work.

17.8.2 Specific Findings

Specific findings from this paper would only have been relevant had the sample size allowed for a more accurate representation of artists in the Free State. Since most professional artists reside in Bloemfontein, and since PACOFS is situated in Bloemfontein, professional artists in Bloemfontein were identified in the resident artists group. Within the non-resident artists group, artists formerly involved with PACOFS Drama were identified. The number of resident and formerly resident artists is small, but representative of provincial trends. Demographics regarding the age, income, perceptions etc. are not reflected in the analysis.

Professional Drama in the Free State

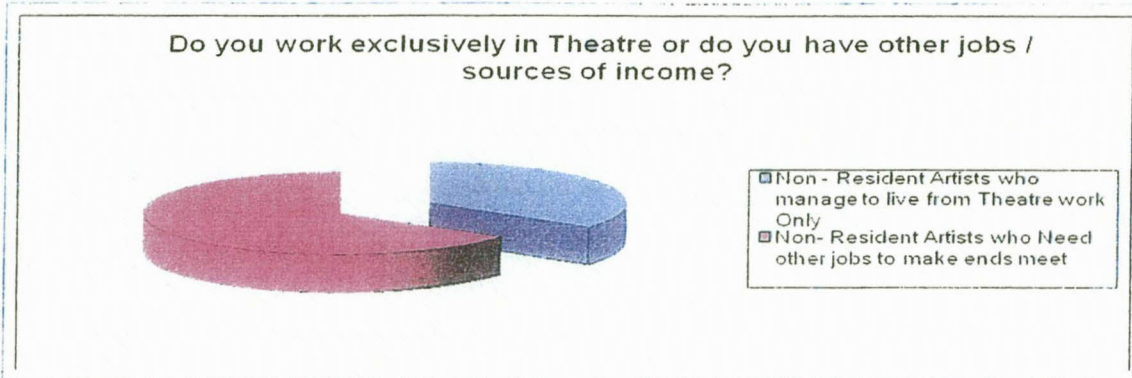
This paper is therefore submitted with no specific profile findings, but rather as a model for a larger and more comprehensive study, perceptions required for the purposes of this study are supplied.

The type of data selected from the questionnaire and analysed graphically pertains to artist's PACOFS, NAC and provincial involvement.

17.9 Presentation of Data

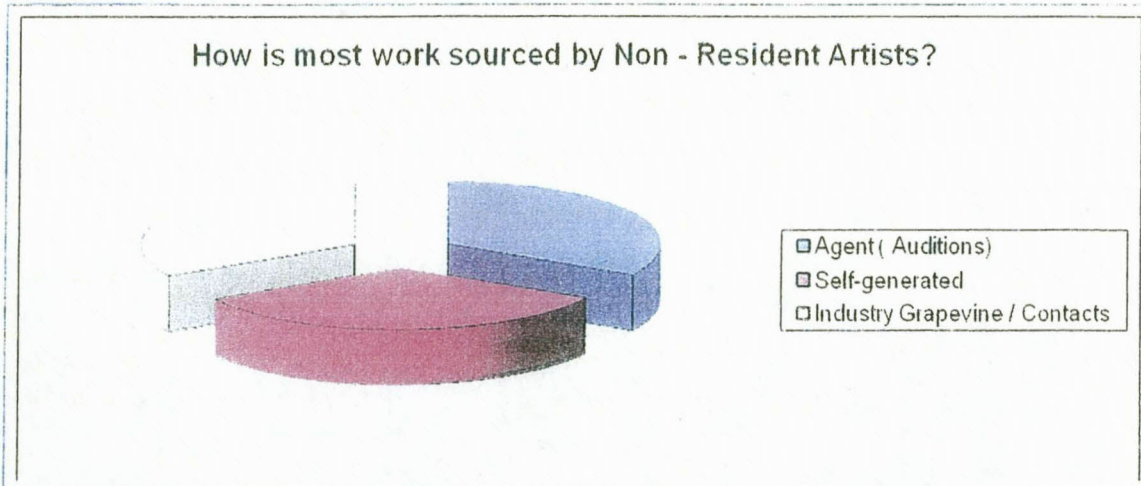
The following is a graphical representation of selected data from the questionnaire (APPENDIX A) sent out to artists and reflects findings pertaining to their work in the Free State. The headings of the graphical representations within the slides refer to combined data from selected questions from the questionnaire (APPENDIX A).

FIG. 1.



In an attempt to establish which artists who had previously managed to work exclusively in theatre (as was the case with permanent drama company members) – combined results from the data point to the fact that most artist Non- resident in the Free State require other sources of income to make ends meet and that Theatre work is not able to sustain them financially.

FIG.2.



Artists who previously worked in the Free State currently source-work through a variety of means. Whether or not work is source through Agents, is self generated or forthcoming from industry contacts, most of this work is source outside of the Free State.

FIG 3.

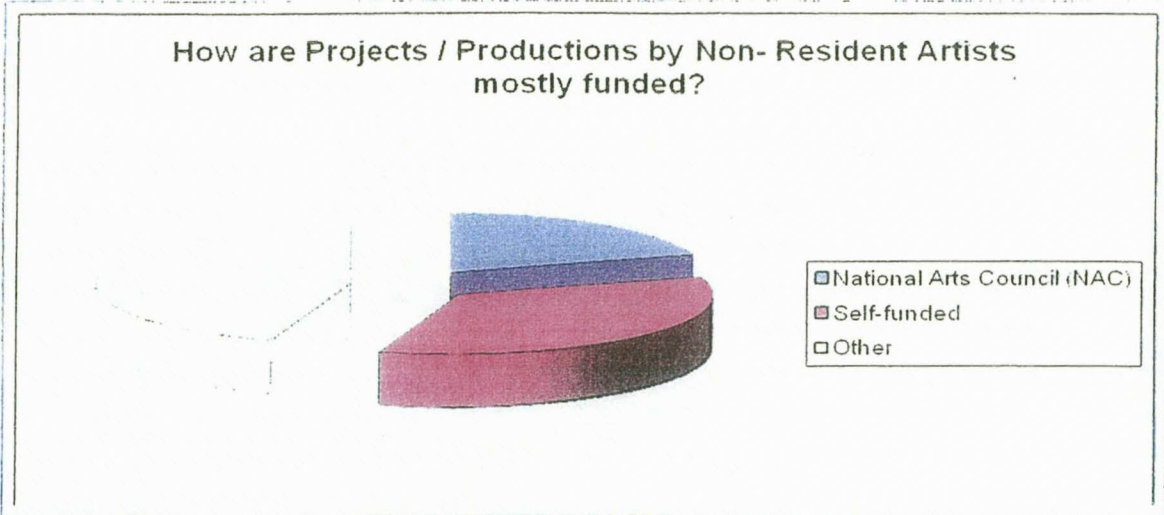
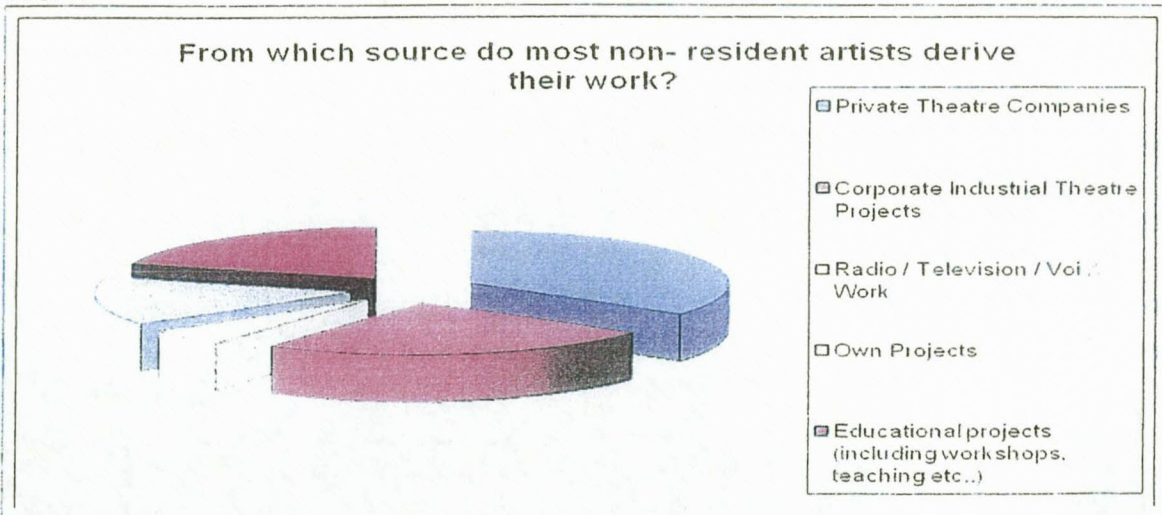


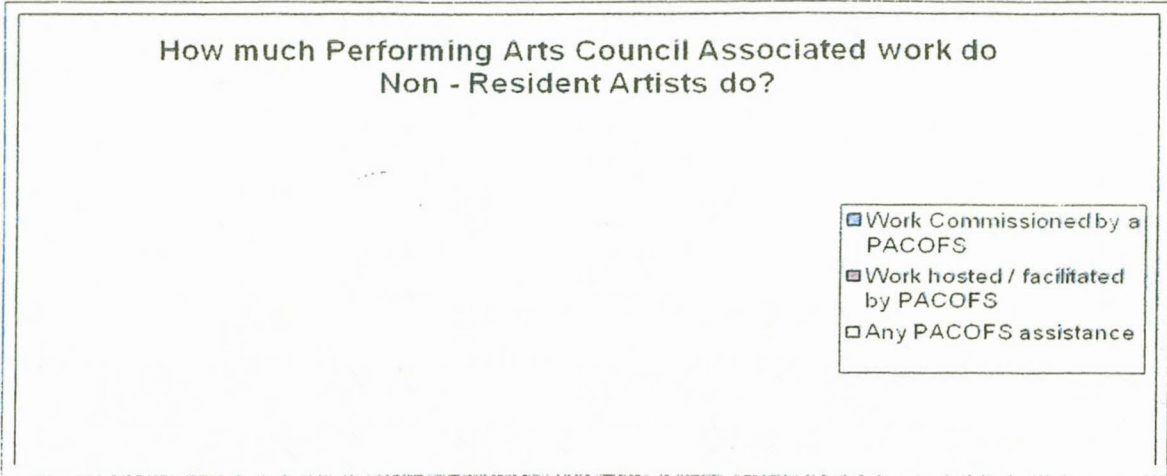
Fig. 3 reflects combined data to suggest that National Arts Council funding represents the smallest portion of sourced funding for Non- resident artists.

FIG. 4.



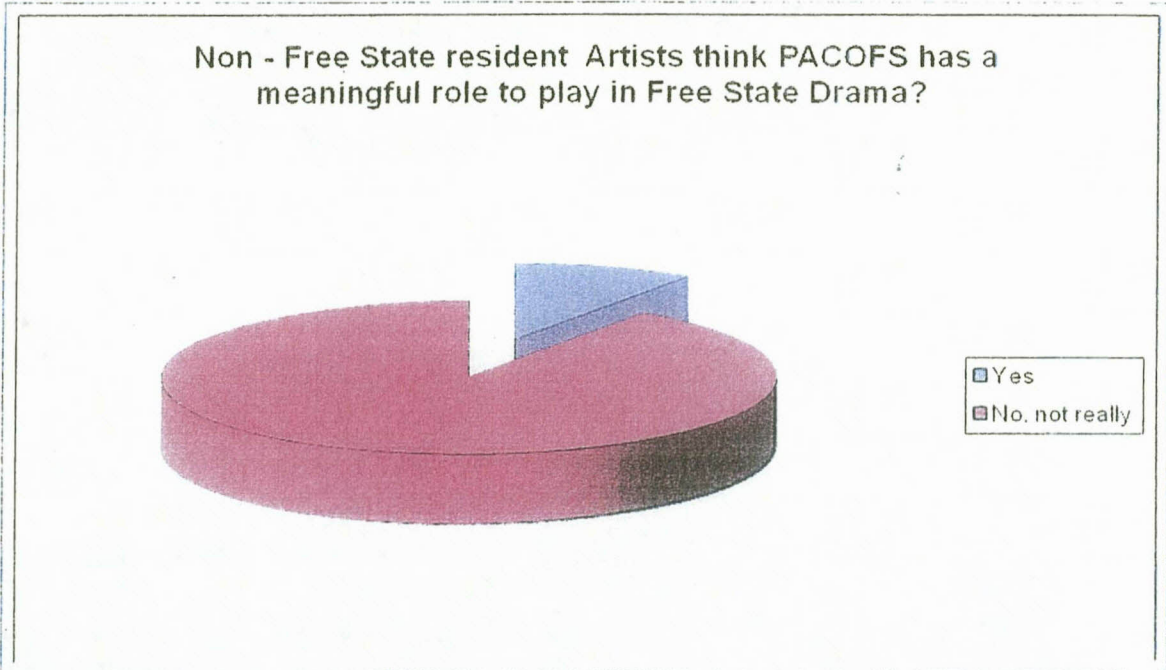
Non-residents respondents still derive most of their work from private Theatre Companies but this is outside the Free State Province.

FIG 5.



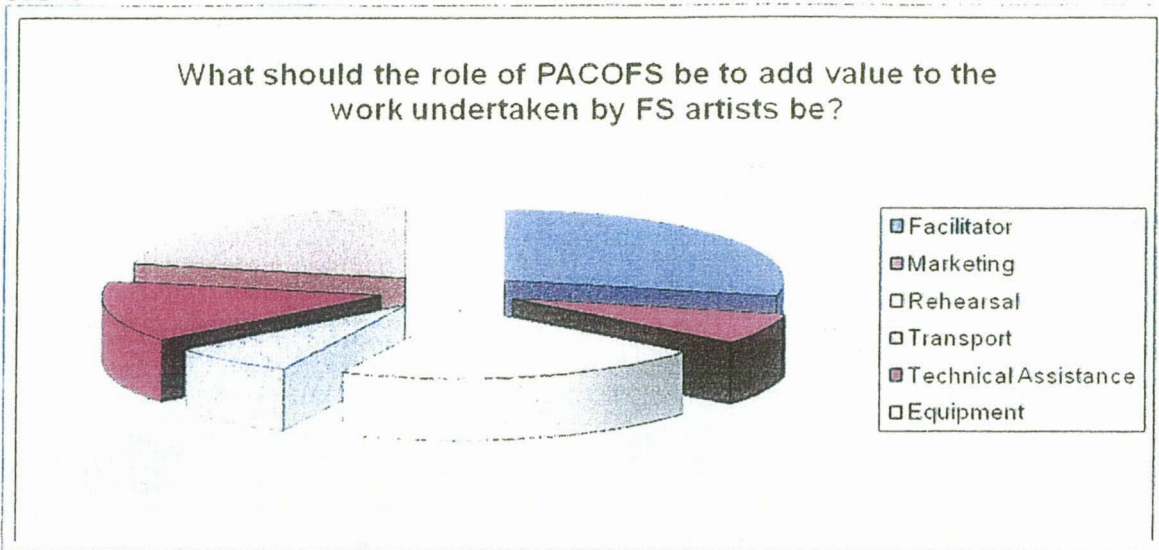
Respondents did no PACOFS associated work since their association with the PACOFS Drama Company ie. They never worked for PACOFS again.

FIG 6.



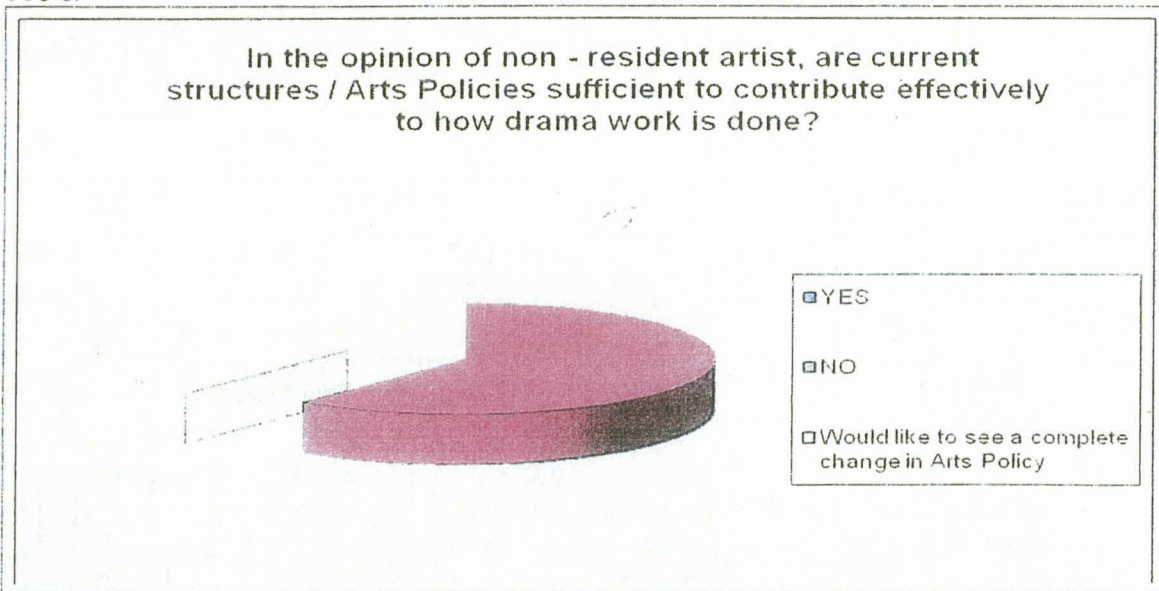
Respondents perception of the role PACOFS plays in Free State Drama from the point of view of a Playhouse versus a Production House.

FIG 7.



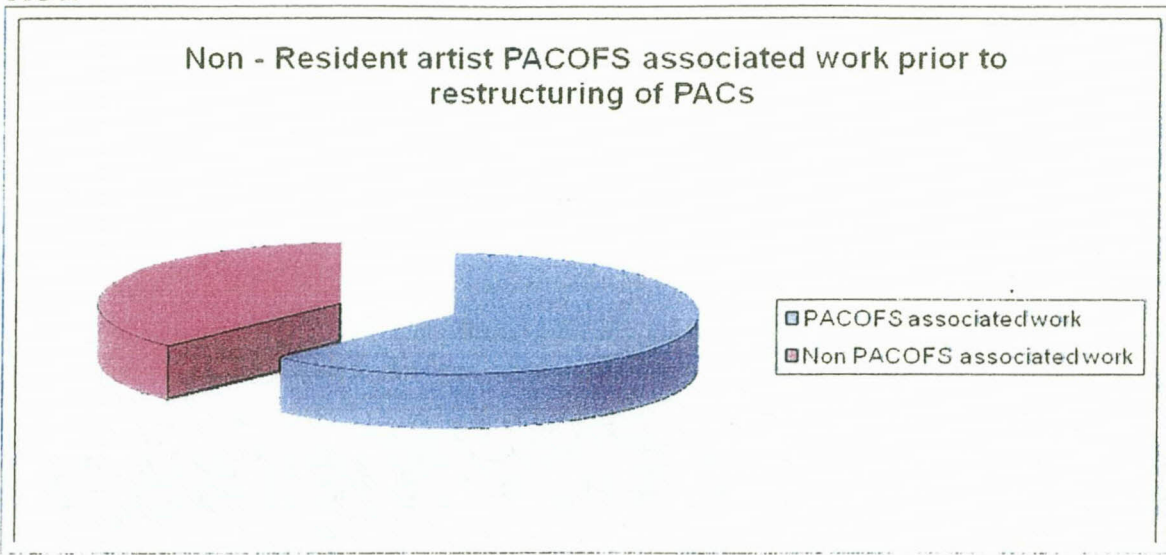
Artists responses to what they perceive the role of PACOFS to be as regards what services PACOFS should provide for artists seeking PAC assistance.

FIG 8.



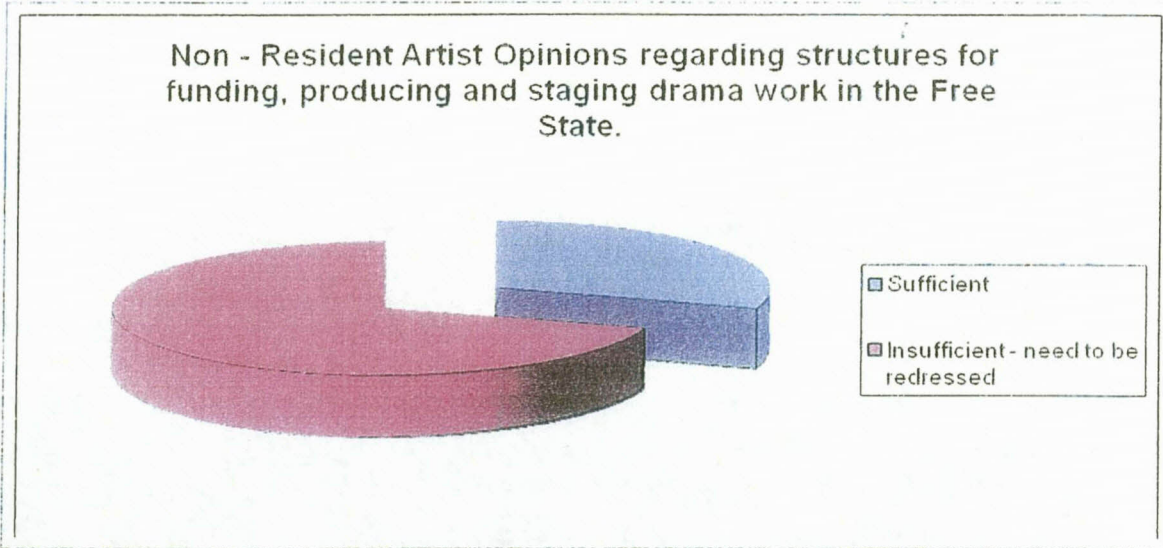
Response from most artists is that they would like to see a complete change in Arts Policy and that most feel structures and Arts Policies are insufficient to contribute effectively to how drama work is done.

FIG 9.



Non Free State residents artists who worked for PACOFS on a free lance basis before restructuring of the PAC – comparison of how much work was done then vs after restructuring.

FIG 10.

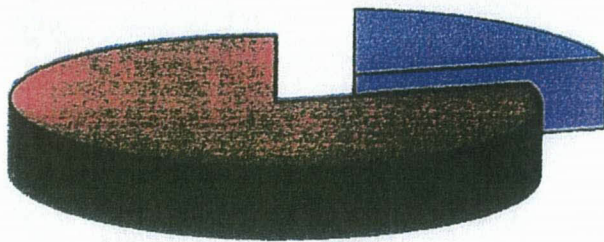


Non – resident actors opinions on existing structures for producing work in the Free State.

17.10 Presentation of data : Resident Artists

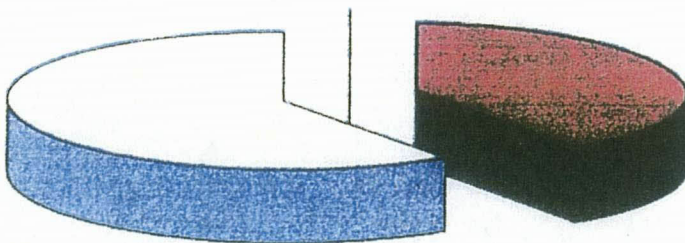
Further to a focused group interview with local artists, contained in this dissertation, the following represents a graphic representation of data from a similar questionnaire answered by non-resident artists, and renders information relevant to resident artist's relationship with PACOFS and other work. (FIGS 1 - 3)

Do you work exclusively in Theatre or do you have other jobs / sources of income?



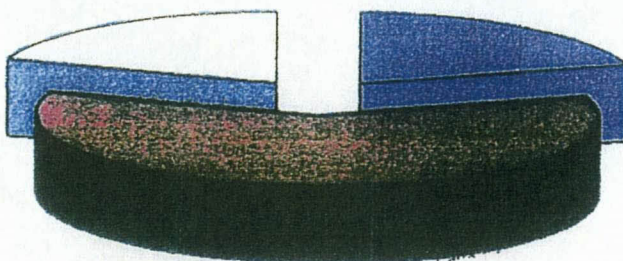
- Resident Artists who manage to live from Theatre work Only
- Resident Artists who Need other jobs to make ends meet

How is most work sourced by Resident Artists?



- Agent (Auditions)
- Self-generated
- Industry Grapevine / Contacts

How are Projects / Productions by Resident Artists mostly funded?



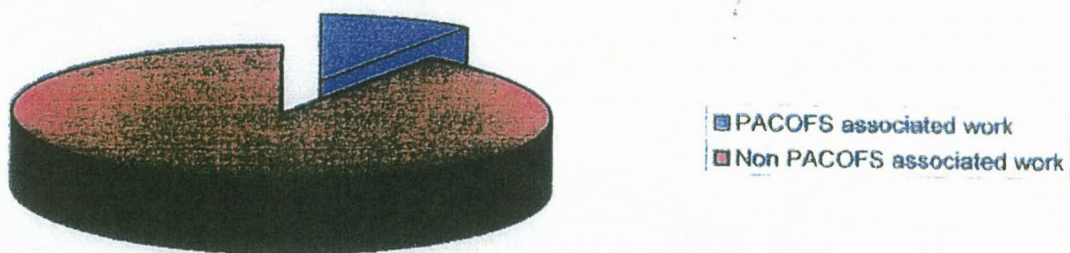
- National Arts Council (NAC)
- Self-funded
- Other

(FIGS 4 - 6)

Resident artist PACOFS associated work prior to restructuring of PACs



Resident Artists Current PACOFS associated work.

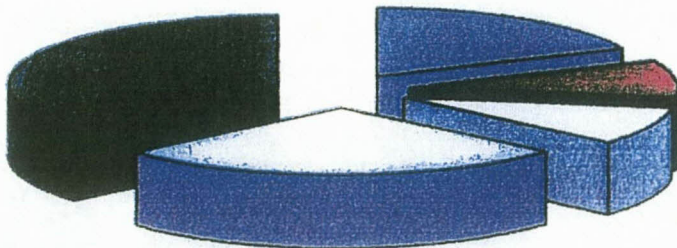


Resident Artist Opinions regarding structures for funding, producing and staging drama work in the Free State.



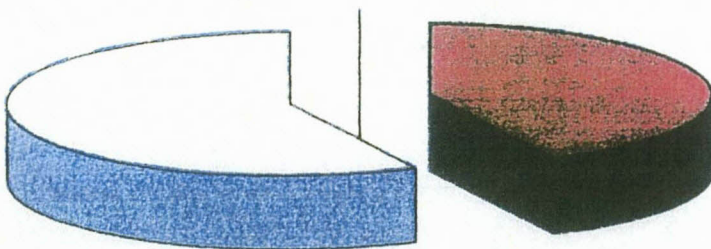
(FIGS 7 - 9)

From which source do most resident artists derive their work?



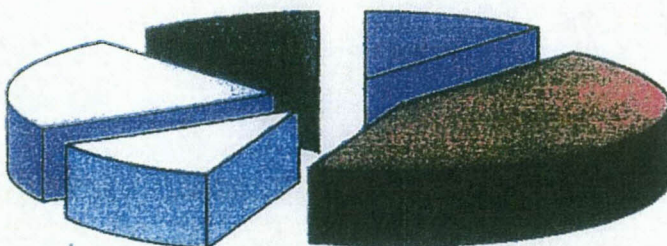
- Private Theatre Companies
- Corporate Industrial Theatre Projects
- Radio / Television
- Own Projects
- Educational projects (including workshops, teaching etc..)

How much Performing Arts Council Associated work do Resident Artists do?



- Work Commissioned by a PACOFS
- Work hosted / facilitated by PACOFS
- Any PACOFS assistance

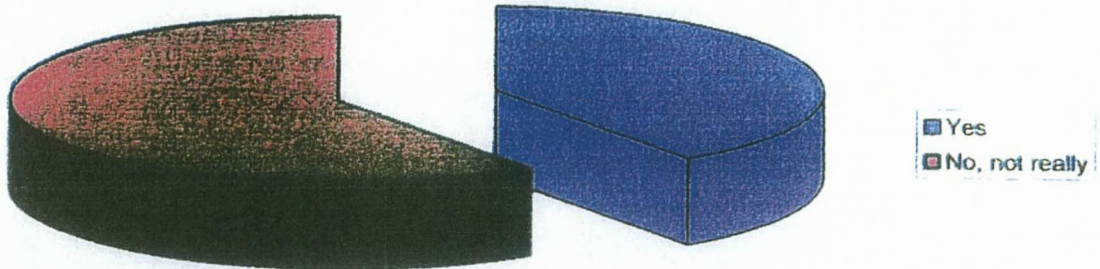
The nature of work by resident artists



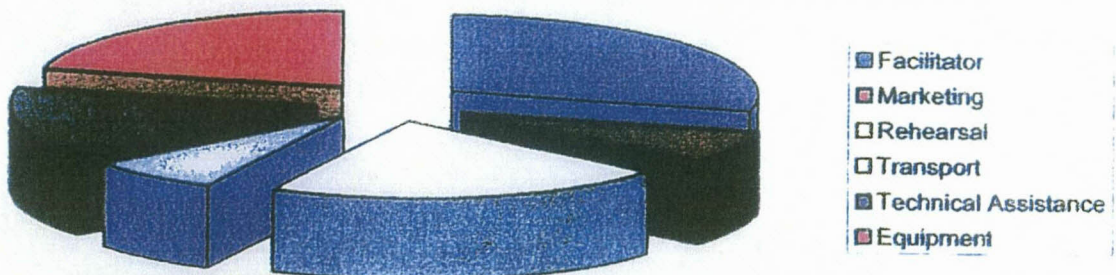
- Hired a Theatre for a Production
- Was assisted by PACOFS its rehearsal space, technical help etc., but received no financial assistance
- A Production was bought and hosted by PACOFS
- Received NAC funding for a project and approached PACOFS for assistance / to stage the production / hire a theatre
- Projects / Productions worked on with Private Companies staged in PACOFS theatre

(FIGS 10 - 12)

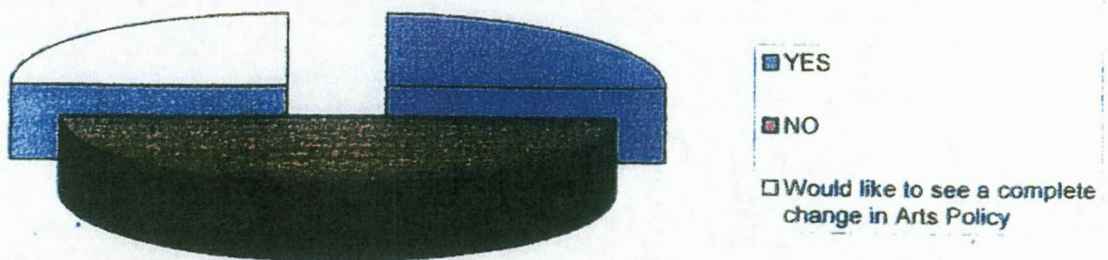
Free State Artists think PACOFS has a meaningful role to play in Free State Drama?



What should the role of PACOFS be to add value to the work undertaken by FS artists be?



In the opinion of local artist, are current structures / Arts Policies sufficient to contribute effectively to how drama work is done?



17. 10 (Cont.) Interpretation of Data : Resident Artists

FIGS 1-3 :

For artists resident in the Free State the following summarized findings apply:

- More resident artists require other jobs to make ends meet than those who manage to live from Theatre work only.
- Most work by resident artists is sourced through industry grapevine and contacts, followed by work which is self generated with very little Free State work generated by actor's agents.
- Most projects are self-funded followed by National Arts Council (NAC) funding.

FIGS 4 -6 :

- Resident artists managed to secure more work through PACOFS before transformation than is available to them now.
- Resident artists regard structures for funding, producing and staging drama work in the Free State as mostly insufficient and feel that these issues need to be redressed.

FIGS 7 – 9 :

- Most resident artists source their work from educational projects (including workshops and teaching), followed by work sourced through private theatre companies, then radio and television work and then corporate and industrial theatre projects.
- Very little work is commissioned directly by PACOFS, with most projects assisted by PACOFS and followed lastly by work facilitated by PACOFS.
- PACOFS was used to assist with rehearsal space, technical help etc. but received no financial assistance.
- Secondly theatres were hired through PACOFS, followed by projects and productions worked on with private companies and staged in PACOFS theatres.

FIGS 10 – 12 :

- Most Free State resident artists do not think PACOFS has a meaningful role to play in Free State Drama than those who do.
- As regards what most think the value PACOFS can add to work undertaken by Free State artists, most feel that facilitation is preferable above production because of PACOFS expertise on these levels.
- Most artists would like to see a complete change in arts policy.

18. Volksblad Kunstefees : A Growing Platform for Professional Drama

This festival has seen in 2008, the most professional drama productions produced since its inception. And as the annual number of festivals grow, they increasingly become the most viable platform for artists to produce their work and attempt a box-office income to recover production costs (Hauptfleisch 2001:169).

The following constitutes a description of drama work presented at the 2008 Volksblad Kunstefees and provides an interesting comparator for the qualitative comparison between the number of productions undertaken by the old PACOFS Drama, its privatised company, Free State Ensemble and the emergent new drama companies in the Free State today.

18. Volksblad Kunstefees : Details of Professional Drama Productions

Lang Dageis na die nag:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	Absa, KKNK, Aardklop National Arts Festival, Kunstetrust.
Cast :	Antoinette Kellerman, Marius Weyers, Stian Barn, Gustav Gerdener and Nicci Schoeman.
No. of Actors	5
Description	Based on Long Days Journey into night which is considered to be one of America's foremost plays addressing pressing modern issues including alcoholism and dysfunctional family life.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Bewys:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	FACTS
Cast :	Bea van der Vyver, Wilhelm van der Walt, Marijda Kamper, Hiletje Moller, Gerben Kamper
No. of Actors	5
Description	A mentally disturbed Mathematics professor who is recently deceased leaves behind unfinished work which his daughter must decide to complete on the basis of its brilliance, or discard as the work of a madman. Production received "production of the festival" award.
No. of Performances at Festival	3

Breinbliksem:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Semi -Professional (student production)
Translation / Original Script :	Based on best selling youth novel adapted for stage by Hennie van Greunen
Funded by :	Wordsmith's Theatre factory, Sanlam
Cast :	Vilje Maritz, Anushka Life, Rudi Brand, Andre Terlanche en Julia Strydom
No. of Actors	5
Description	Confronting issues facing teens including Sex and drugs.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Diensmeisies:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	Skoendoos Produksies
Cast :	Nicole Holm, Martelize Kolver en Petrus du Preez.
No. of Actors	3
Description	Two sisters, Claire and Solange are caught up in twisted reality in this grotesque and absurd play by Genet. Their jealousy, humor, hate and attempts at escaping their circumstances form thematic cornerstones. Madame, the old Lady who employs them gets caught in the cross fire of their hatred and mockery. Reality is as much a nightmare as their games. Absurd theatre in which traditional conventions are challenged.
No. of Performances at Festival.	3

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Dis ek Anna:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional / Semi -Professional (student production)
Translation / Original Script :	Adaptation of best selling Novel of same Title
Funded by :	FACTS
Cast :	Antionette Louw, Peter Taljaard (professional)
No. of Actors	2 Professional
Description	Die pad le donker, eindeloos voor my. Soos my lewe. Nee, soos my lewe was. Voor die son more opkom, sal ek horn in die oe kyk, sal ek horn laat boet. Ek is op pad om my lewe terug te vat. Nie te vra nie. Nie te bedel nie. Te vat. So sal dit wees. Die novelle Dis ek, Anna, geskryf deur Elbie Lotter ('n skuilnaam), is suksesvol deur Anelle Bester vir die verhoog verwerk. Die produksie het as deel van Sanlam se SPAT-kompetisie in 2006 op Aardklop gedebuteer. Dis ek, Anna, is 'n verhaal van seksuele misbruik en verkragting. n' Verhaal van 'n vrou se oorlewing. (Programme Notes : Volksblad Kunstefees 2008)
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

A.K.A. Mosotho

Language :	English
Semi / Professional :	Community Theatre
Translation / Original Script :	Original Script
Funded by :	NAC
Cast :	Palesa Khalaki, Walter Ramakatsa, Tshediso Kolobe.
No. of Actors	3
Description	This is a play of true reflection with the Free State (Bloemfontein and Botshabelo) as background. It is about two young men who usually meet every morning at the corner of Nelson Mandela Drive where they wait for a person (uBase) who can offer them jobs. The danger of unemployment and overpopulation of illiterate people and unwanted babies are brought to the audience through deep and sad emotions when these young men (Mosotho and Darndark) find out they are brothers from the same father (Papa Kolokoti) at his funeral.
No. of Performances at Festival.	2

Saad :

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Original Script – Saartjie Botha
Funded by :	Vleis, Rys en Aartappels – Absa Aardklop
Cast :	Marthinus Basson, Juanita Swanepoel, Nicole Holm, Stian Barn, Altan Lingerer, Thembeke Sivanyana en Xoliswa Nkolose
No. of Actors	3
Description	Daar was 'n tyd toe 'n boer 'n baas was, en 'n plaas 'n koninkryk. Met Saad wat in vrugbare lande val. 'n Boer is niks sonder grond nie. Sender 'n boer is grond 'n mynveld. In Suid-Afrika. En dan is daar sentiment. Saad: Voortbrengsel van 'n plant waaruit by ontkieming 'n soorgelyke plant ontwikkel. Afstammeling(e), kind(ers), nakomelingskap; Sperma, teelvog van die manlike geslag; Kiem, begin, oorsaak, oorsprong.
No. of Performances at Festival.	3

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Boom! :

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	ATKV
Cast :	Hilletje Moller.
No. of Actors	1
Description	Dis Nataniel op sy beste met die skreeusnaakse, makabere eenvrouvertoning. 'n Wereldberoemde opera-diva woon deesdae op 'n agterlike dorpie by die agterlikste inwoner, haar suster. Op 'n kombuistafel in 'n boom neem die twee eksentrieke karakters beurte om wag te hou, maar kyk die grootste gevaar mis: mekaar. Moller vertolk albei susters.
No. of Performances at Festival.	3

Die Begrafnis:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	UFS
Cast :	Ilne Fourie, Misha Daniels, Annalize Jortier, Carel Nel, Christopher Mey en Anel Kotze.
No. of Actors	6
Description	Wat gemaak as Ant Vossie se man nie wou luister na haar vermanings nie? Sy't horn hoeveel keer gewaarsku dat sy gewig horn gaan doodmaak. En nou's dit Vierman se begrafnis en dis 'n krisis, want die man was groot! En die ys raak min en die deur is maar smal . . . (Die opvoering is op die afgelope Absa KKNK as vanjaar se SPAT-wenner aangewys, terwyl Luwes as beste regisseur bekroon is, line Fourie as beste aktrise en Nortier en Nel die silwerprys deel.)
No. of Performances at Festival.	3

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Cirque du Sussie:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	Handyminds
Cast :	Marion Holm
No. of Actors	1
Description	Een aand jaag 'n bakkie in Sussie se huis vas. Sekondes later sit haar bure op opvoustoele voor die huis, reg vir 'n show. Juffrou Malherbe sing, die polisie is die narre, die dronkbestuurder die waaghals en Sussie die ringmeester. Laat die sirkus begin!
No. of Performances at Festival.	5

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Dowwe Dolla - Saal 10 :

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professioneel
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	Arena Produksies
Cast :	Margit Meyer-Rodenbeck
No. of Actors	1
Description	Dolla vier haar eerste dekade en keer terug uit Kuba, waar sy haar drie-week-graad in medisyne met vlieende enkels deurgekom het. Dokter Dolla pak haar spaar-lewer in, steel pasiente se horlosies en klop aan by die Binnewand-hospitaal. Sy't 'n koorspen en is nie bang om dit te gebruik nie .
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Indien moeg stop rus:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professioneel
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	Passassiers Produksies
Cast :	Lulu Botha, Brendan Daniels
No. of Actors	2
Description	'n Skreeusnaakse komedie oor spietkops, vroue wat hul ry ken en mans wat nie regtig goed bestuur nie. Mans raak lief vir hul karre, partykeer is hulle liever vir hul karre as vir hul vrouens. 'n Stampie of 'n skrapie aan 'n kar is vir baie mans soos siekte in die familie. Erg. Vir die meeste vroue is 'n kar gewoonlik maar net 'n duur manier om erens te kom. Maar nie vir almal nie. Daar is vroue wat van karre hou, en van ry en van paaie. Vroue wat weet mans is nie suike goeie bestuurders as wat hulle dink nie. Dis wat Myrtle Maritz weet as sy 'n ongeluk sien. Myrtle vrek mos oor 'n ongeluk. As daar 'n slag is, is Myrtle by.
No. of Performances at Festival.	3

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Groet die Grotvrou:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professioneel
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	Rapport, RSG, Oos Rand Stereo
Cast :	Karen Wessels.
No. of Actors	1
Description	Dit is die prettige antwoord op Rob Becker se Broadway-treffer <i>Defending the Caveman</i> wat verlede jaar op die fees as <i>Groet die Grotman</i> te sien was. Dit dwaal diep in die grotte van die vroulike psige rond en werp die stereotipiese opvattinge wat die manlike lede van ons spesie oor hul vroulike eweknieë koester, omver. Dit is geen vingerwysing nie, eerder 'n komiese kykie na die giere en grille van die mensdom - mans en vroue.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

(Programme Notes : Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Shirley Valentyn:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professioneel
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	Wordsmiths Theare Factory / Crocs
Cast :	Shaleen Surtie Richards
No. of Actors	1
Description	Watter rol speel logic tog in die huwelik? As ons net by Johnny se suster in Montagu gaan kuier, kry die man 'n veluitslag. Ma' dis sy probleem, ek gaan Greece toe, of hy dit nou like of nie. In die toneelgebeurtenis van 2008 vier Shaleen met die briljante teks haar terugkeer as solokunstenaar na die verhoog.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

Sophia Mentz beredder haar boedel:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professioneel
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	Absa Aardklop
Cast :	Bettie Kemp, Eric Nobbs, Helene Truter, Henrietta Gryffenberg, Pierre Breytenbach en Karen Wessels
No. of Actors	6
Description	Die Mentze het 'n nuk om die lewe na die dood met groot bygeloof en vrees te benader. Miskien daarom dat Sophia die hele spul bymekaar laat kom vir die lees van haar testament, 'n Heerlike lighartigheid uit die pen van PG du Plessis vol knoeiery, draadwerk, ou vetes, wantroue en afguns.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Wyk14:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professioneel
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	Frank Opperman
Cast :	Frank Opperman
No. of Actors	1
Description	Pottie Potgieter, wat sy storie in die uwe, Pottie Potgieter vertel het, is steeds werkloos. Pottie besluit egter om as onafhanklike kandidaat aan 'n munisipale wyksverkiesing deel te neem. Hy stel sy saak, vertel stories en probeer sy vrou, Maggie, wat in Saoedi-Arabie as verpleegster werk, teruglok Suid-Afrika toe. Pottie kyk hoe ons land nou lyk en soos wat dit voor 1994 gelyk het; soms is dit snaaks, maar ook hartseer! Hy kyk na redes waarom ons nie Suid-Afrika moet verlaat nie.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

Aspoestertjie:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Adaptation and Translation
Funded by :	National Lottery
Cast :	Elizabeth Brown, Bea van der Vyver, Peter Taljaard, Wilhelm van der Walt, Marijda Kamper, Douglas Merriman, Pieter Venter en Hiletje Moller.
No. of Actors	8
Description	Die immer- groen verhaal van Aspoestertjie en haar wrechte stiefsusters kom tot lewe op die verhoog in 'n opwindende pantomime-agtige produksie wat oud en jonk sal vermaak en bekoor. Aspoestertjie se ontpopping van diensmeisie tot prinses gryp al eeue lank gehore se verbeelding aan en met die produksie vol sang en dans en baie pret beloof dit om net so gewild soos verlede jaar se produksie van Piqgghio te wees - ook geregisseur deur Kamper.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Babalela:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional Marionette Theatre
Translation / Original Script :	Adaptation of Novel
Funded by :	Interactive Productions
Cast :	Izak Taljaard, Botha Enslin, Werner van Wyk, Annerique van Wyk, Jacolene Frank.
No. of Actors	5
Description	"Diep, diep tin 'n donker bos..." Die woorde laat kleintjies rondskarrel vir 'n sitplekkie! Storietyd! Ontelbare Mammass en Pappas lees eike aand die storieboekie vir hul kleintjies. Babalela is Suid-Afrika se eie Afrikaanse "Barney"! Kleintjies ontmoet Babalela nie net in lewende lywe nie, maar hulle mag selfs vir horn stywe drukkies kom gee en hul geheimpies..jn sy pers ore kom fluister! Daar is ook die groot marionette: Potifant, Meermoskat, Knortand, Wrrrurrijaie en die agt Fripperwakkies! Baha-telaJnaak ons trots om Afrikaans te wees!
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Die Goue Pantoffels - Die nuwe agent:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Adaptation
Funded by :	Die Kenstenaars
Cast :	Gustav Gardener, Ane Mostert, Cornel van Zyl en Carel Nel.
No. of Actors	4
Description	Gustav Gardener, Ane Mostert, Cornel van Zyl en Carel Nel.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees :2008)

Haas Das: Boeboe en die warm, pap maroela:

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional Puppet Theatre
Translation / Original Script :	Original Script
Funded by :	EnterActive Productions
Cast :	Izak Taljaard, Botha Enslin, Werner van Wyk, Annerique van Wyk, Jacolene Frank, Edith Fumarola.
No. of Actors	6
Description	Haas Das is terug, ook in 'n toneelstuk. Haas Das is in Suid-Afrika soos braaivleis, boerewors en rugby. Maar die jonger TV-geslag ken horn nie. Kind en grootmens het van 1976 af jare lank gekyk na die elegante haas wat die nuus gelees het - met Riaan Cruywagen se stem nogal. Dis nou al 30 jaar sedert Haas Das die eerste keer op die TV-skerm verskyn het. Al sien ons horn nie meer op TV nie, het hy kultuurgoed geword.
No. of Performances at Festival.	4

Liewe Heksie en die wals

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professioneel
Translation / Original Script	Original Script
Funded by :	Absa
Cast :	Margit Meyer-Rodenbeck, Deon van Zyl.
No. of Actors	2
Description	Heksie kom immers al 'n lang pad saam met die meeste van ons. Om die waarheid te se, die gehoor was so betrokke by die storie dat die akteurs hul hande vol gehad het en soms nie eens hul dialoog kon uitkry nie.
No. of Performances at Festival.	5

(Programme Notes Volksblad Kunstefees : 2008)

Volksblad Kunstefees : Production Analysis

The following represents a graphic data analysis which reflects the drama programme of the 2008 Volksblad Arts Festival in Bloemfontein.

Since this festival has become the predominant platform for, especially professional Afrikaans Drama, the demographics of professional drama is represented here as an interesting comparator not only to work undertaken by the previous PACOFS Drama, but also to work undertaken by Drama Companies which have come into existence since the closure of the PACOFS Drama Department in 1996.

FIG 1. PRODUCTION LANGUAGE SPLIT

Afrikaans	20
English	1

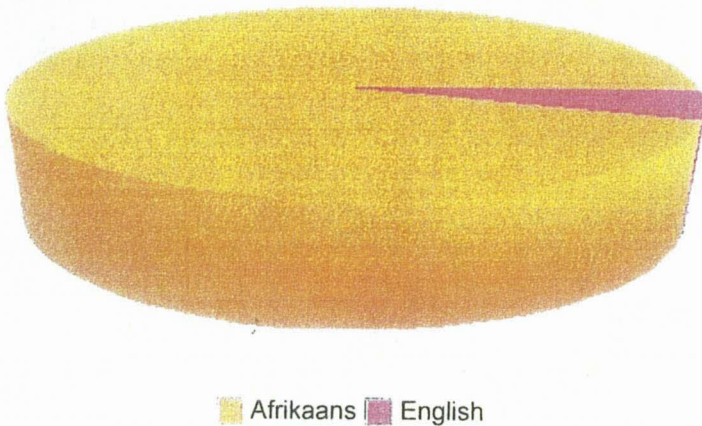


FIG 2. PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTION PROFILE

Professional	18
Semi-Professional	2
Community	1

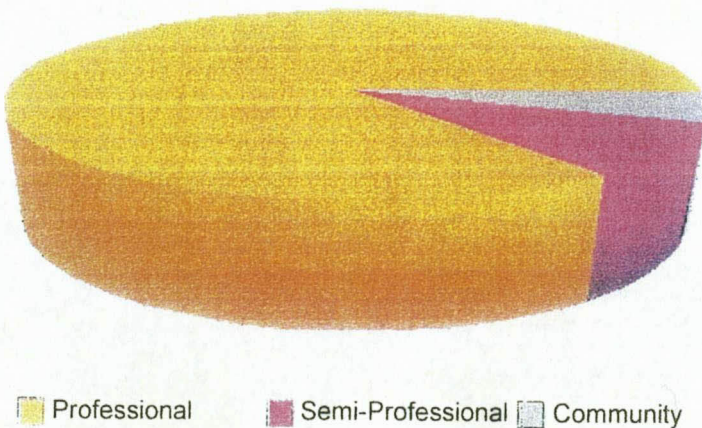


FIG 3. SCRIPT PROFILE

Original Afrikaans	13
Translation	4
English	1
Adaptation	4

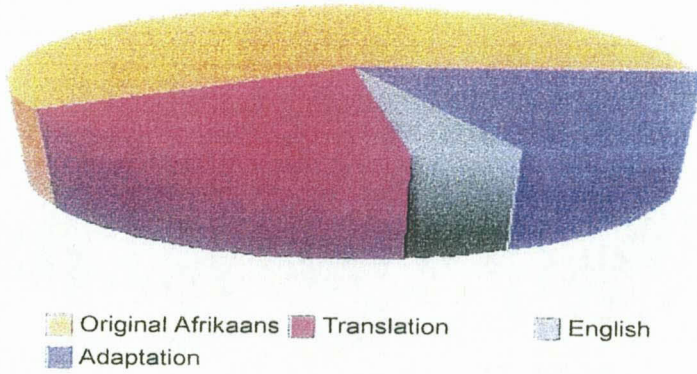
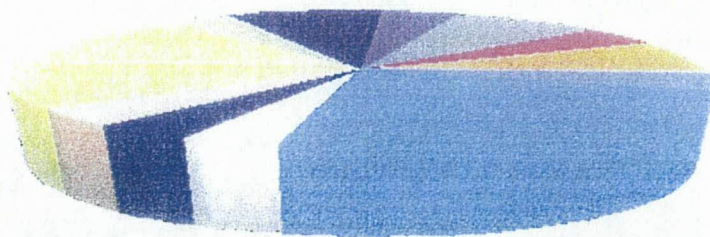


FIG 4. FUNDERS

ABSA	2
KKNK	1
AARDKLOP	2
KUNSTETRUST	1
FACTS	2
SANLAM	1
PRIVATE	6
NAC	1
ATKV	1
UFS	1
MEDIA 24	6
NATIONAL LOTTERY	1



19. Facts : One year of Professional Productions.

Skerp-Sin:



Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	National Lottery
Cast :	Hilletje Möller, Nico Luwes, Wilhelm van der Walt, Crystal Donna Roberts, Stephanie Brink, Carel Nel, Marijda Kamper, Ilne Fourie, Sizo Vena
No. of Actors	9
Description	<p>Skerp-Sin is die vertaling van die Amerikaner Margaret Edson se drama "Wit", wat die Pulitzer-prys vir dramá in 1999 ontvang het. Die teks handel oor prof. Vivian Bearing, 'n universiteitsdosent in 17de-eeuse poësie, wat gediagnoseer word met stadium vier metastatiese kanker van die ovarium. Bearing is 'n befaamde spesialis in die ongelooflike intrinsieke metafisiese sonnëtte van die digter John Donne. Haar benadering tot haar siekte is soos haar benadering tot Donne se werke: aggressief ondersoekend en intens rasioneel. Maar gedurende haar siekte en haar opname in 'n chemoterapieprogram by 'n opleidingshospitaal moet sy haar lewe, onder meer haar gebrek aan verhoudings met ander mense, en haar werk herdink met 'n diepe insig en humor, wat transformerend vir haar, sowel as die gehoor is. In die drama reflekteer sy oor haar reaksies in die siklus wat die kankerbehandeling vereis en belangrike momente in haar lewe. Dr. Jason Posner vind sy geloof in die mediese wetenskap terwyl die verpleegster, Susie Monahan die menslike kant met empatie hanteer. Dr. Kelekian, die navorsingshoof sien Vivian net as 'n besondere navorsingsgeval en niks meer nie.</p> <p>(FACTS Report to National Lottery, 2008).</p>
No. of Performances .	4 + 5 = 9
Total production Cost	R200,904.88
Box Office Income	R 1,887.56

Hegter :



Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	National Lottery
Cast :	Peter Taljaard, Mareijda Kamper, Crystal Donna Roberts, Carel Nel.
No. of Actors	4
Description	<p>Met dié vertaling van Patrick Marber se toneelstuk "Closer", word vier doodgewone mense in "Hegter" uitgebeeld, wat liefde en seks onopsetlik gebruik om mekaar se lewens te ruineer. Dit lewer deur eksplisiete taalgebruik - kritiek en sosiale kommentaar op moderne liefdeslewens.</p> <p>Daar word weggebreek van die tradisionele Aspoestertjie-verhaal.</p> <p>Dit is 'n kontroversiële toneelstuk, wat nie terugdeins om die liefde en liefdesverhoudings se ware kleure ten toon te stel nie, en is dus nie geskik vir sensitiewe kykers nie.</p> <p>As Hollywood-rolprent (wenner van 2 Golden Globe-toekennings en benoem vir 'n Oscar) en as toneelstuk lê dit die hegte verhoudings tussen mense op 'n intieme en blatante manier bloot. Dit sal die gehoor forseer om die mees basiese en natuurlike neigings van die menslike natuur in die 21eeu te ervaar en te verwerk.</p> <p>(FACTS Report to National Lottery, 2008).</p>
No. of Performances .	4
Total production Cost	R52,420
Box Office Income	R 6,127.74

Pinocchio:



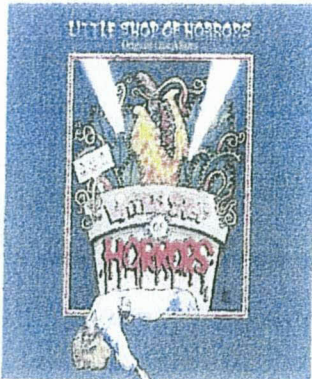
Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	National Lottery
Cast :	Crystal Donna Roberts, Pieter Venter, Carel Nel, De Beer, Cloete Wilhelm, van der Walt, J P, du Plessis, Bea, van der Vyfer, Michelle Luwes, Godfrey Manenye , Hillétje Möller, Madre van Staden
No. of Actors	12
Description	<p>Pinocchio is die beroemde verhaal van die marionet wat lewendig word nadat, Gepetto, die marionetmaker die wens uitspreek dat hy so graag 'n seun van sy eie wil hê.</p> <p>Pinocchio deel verskillende avonture met onder andere die vreesagtige Meneer Vuurvreter, Jakkals en Kat, die sluwe Koetsier, die kwaai Ringmeester en nog vele meer, op sy weg om 'n volwaardige mens-seun vir Gepetto te word.</p> <p>(FACTS Report to National Lottery, 2008).</p>
No. of Performances .	4 Volksblad Kunstefees + 5 Aardklop = 9
Total production Cost	R83,220.45
Box Office Income	R 32,172.08

Maaltyd vir Een:



Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	National Lottery
Cast :	Gerben Kamper, Stephanie Brink, Peter Taljaard
No. of Actors	3
Description	<p>Maaltyd vir een is die Afrikaanse vertaling van "The 90th Birthday or Dinner for One" uit die oorspronklike Engelse wat in 1963 vir die Hamburgse TV as swart en wit televisieskets verfilm is. Die klassieke klug met Freddie Frinton as James, en May Warden as Miss Sophie, het sedertdien 'n Duitse tradisie geword en word regoor Duitsland en tot onlangs in Suid Afrika op Oujaarsaand uitgesaai.</p> <p>In die vertaling van Nico Luwes speel die bekende Peter Taljaard die Duitse Aankondiger, terwyl die toneelveterane Gerben Kamper as die skreeusnaakse Butler en Stephanie Brink as die 90tigjarige Sofie optree. Haar vier vriende wat lank reeds dood en begrawe is word vergestalt deur die Butler wat natuurlik al die heildronke names hul moet drink en uiteindelik hoog gekoring aan al die ou dame se eise moet voldoen. Wanneer hy vra: "Selfde prosedure as laasjaar, Madam?" kom haar antwoord elke keer. "Selfde prosedure as elke jaar, James!" Met die klug bied die FACTS toneelgroep klug van besondere hoë artistieke standaard vir die hele gesin.</p> <p>(FACTS Report to National Lottery, 2008).</p>
No. of Performances	4 + 5 = 9
Total production Cost	R51,526.55
Box Office Income	R 13,111.56

Little Shop of Horrors:



Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	National Lottery
Cast :	Neil Sandilands, Bea van der Vyver, Trudie Schutte, Cornel van Zyl, Braam Muller, Nanette Naude, Wilhelm van der Walt, Quintus Aslette, Eduard Bosman, Crystal Donna Roberts, Lezanda Visser, Nieke Lombard, Leendert de Jager
No. of Actors	13
Description	Seymour is the clumsy employee of Mushnik's Flower Shop on skid row, where he daydreams of Audrey, his co-worker. After no business, Mr. Mushnik decides to close the shop. Seymour and Audrey tell him that they think displaying something interesting, strange, and new in the window will attract business. Seymour brings up the perfect plant for the job: a flytrap-esque plant he calls Audrey II (voiced by Levi Stubbs, of the Four Tops). The plant immediately attracts business. After the store closes, the plant begins to wilt, and Mr. Mushnik orders Seymour to fix it. That night, Seymour discovers what Audrey II eats: blood. Seymour feeds the plant his blood, and as a result, it gets bigger and bigger. When Seymour becomes unable to keep feeding it, the plant begins to talk and urges him to kill people and feed them to him. Audrey II promises him rewards, and that he'll bring him business, luxuries, everything he's ever wanted, and Audrey. (FACTS Report to National Lottery, 2008).
No. of Performances .	7
Total prod. Cost	R 350 000
Box Office Income	R 50,325.00

Die Huweliksaansoek:

Anton Chekhov se

Die Huweliksaansoek met André Stolz



14 – 16 Feb 2008
Scaena-teater



Besprekings: Computicket

Language :	Afrikaans
Semi / Professional :	Professional
Translation / Original Script :	Translation
Funded by :	National Lottery
Cast :	Andre Scholtz, Hilletje Moller, Carel Nel
No. of Actors	3
Description	<p>Die Huweliksaansoek is 'n baie snaakse kort komedie omdat die basis van die argument onmiddelik aanvaar en verstaan word. Die eenvoudige en nie-so intelligente Ivan Vassiliyich Lomov, wat nie 'n gestryery lank genoeg kan uitstel om die huweliksaansoek te doen nie, word gespeel deur Carel Nel. Hillétje Möller as die sterk boerenooi, Natalia Stepanovna Tshubukov se gepaste frustrasies en haar formidable woede-uitbarstings dra veel by tot die pret. Bydraend tot die deurmekaarspul is haar vader, Stephan Stephanowitz Tshubukov se desperate pogings om die twee getroud te kry. Die rol word gespeel deur die beroemde Johannesburgse akteur en regisseur van verskeie Chekhov komedies en dramas, André Stolz. Saam verskaf die drie die pandemonium en waansin wat enige toekomstige gelukkige huwelik gewoonlik inhou!</p> <p>Die intrige van die internasionale beroemde komedie is eenvoudig maar skreeusnaaks. Die tengerige Lomov arriveer om die hand te vra van Nastalia, die wispelturige boerdogter van die buurplaas. Ongelukkig beskik sy ook oor 'n plofbare humeur! Baie vinnig verval hulle in 'n gestryery oor plaasgrense, eiendomsreg en jaghonde. Sal hulle geredekawelry 'n stok voor hulle voorgenome huwelik steek. Sal hulle ooit trou? Gaan hulle vir die res van hulle lewens baklei? (FACTS Report to National Lottery, 2008).</p>
No. of Performances .	3
Total production Cost	R68,166
Box Office Income	R 10,789.84

FACTS : Production Analysis

Major Sponsor : National Lottery

Production Language Split :

English	1
Afrikaans	5

No. of Actors employed : 44

Production Cost :

Skerp - Sin	200 904
Hegter	52 420
Pinnocchio	83 220
Maaltyd vir Een	51 526
Little Shop of Horrors	350 000
Die Huweliksaanzoek	68 166
Total :	806 237

(FACTS Report to National Lottery, 2008).

20 . FACTS: A Production year by a Professional Drama Company in the Free State.

20.1 Introduction

The following interview constitutes an introduction to a semi-independent Professional Drama Company in the Free State: Free State Acts or FACTS. The researcher held an interview with the Company Manager, Mareijda Kamper at the offices of the UFS Drama Department in September of 2008. The purpose of the interview was to investigate the circumstances surrounding the establishment of the Company and its activities through the most knowledgeable person involved with the general running of the Company. Kamper is involved in the administration of productions and reporting on funding as well as production co-ordination. As a professional stage actress she has played a variety of roles in numerous FACTS productions, of which the latest, "Bewys", was awarded play of the festival at the recent Volksblad Kunstefees. (See FACTS production data earlier in this dissertation). The researcher has been involved as professional actor with four FACTS productions over the period 2007/2008. (See FACTS production data earlier in this dissertation).

Since, as mentioned above, the researcher has provided a fairly detailed description of all professional drama productions undertaken for one full year, and since most of the productions are sponsored, it seems pertinent to establish how funding is secured and the infrastructure employed by the company for administrating these funds and reporting to sponsors. The research method employed here is an informal, recorded interview with the aim of supplying background and context to the discussion of the companies work discussed later. The full interview transcription is supplied to provide the reader with a qualitative impression regarding the formation and activities of the independent Drama Company : FACTS.

20.2 Interview with Mareijda Kamper : FACTS Production Manager

Researcher : Die doel van hierdie onderhoud is om agtergrond te kry oor die bedrywighede van FACTS. Ek verstaan dat wat die FACTS geselskap betref is jy redelik betrokke by die administrasie, sameroeping en die basiese produksiebestuur. Kan jy moontlik in jou eie woorde net 'n kort beskrywing gee van wie en wat FACTS is.

MK: Kortliks is dit die Vrystaat Universiteit se Drama Departement wat daarby betrokke is. Dit is

gestig om akteurs in die Vrystaat 'n geleentheid te gee om aan 'n Teater produksiegeselskap te behoort. En om werk te skep vir akteurs wat in die Vrystaat is. (Wil bly). Ek weet nie hoekom dit so is nie, maar in Bloemfontein is die beperkings groot tov werk. Hier's nie casting agents of produksiehuise nie – en dit is maar hoekom die meeste afgestudeerde akteurs na die groter stede gaan. Ek dink die gedagte agter FACTS was om jong akteurs professionele spelgeleentheid te gee en sodoende akteurs (al is dit vir 'n rukkie), in Bloemfontein te hou deur vir hulle werk te skep in Bloemfontein.

Researcher : Dit is 'n professionele platform?

MK: Ja, definitief.

Researcher: Studente wat as semi-professioneel beskou word ook betrek?

MK : Ja, ek is byvoorbeeld in my tweede en derde jaar betrek by verhoogbestuur, maar dan moet jy jouself ook bewys aan die company.

Die geselskap gebruik nie sommer enigiemand nie – jy word gebruik in produksieverband betrek as die company weet jy is bevoeg genoeg om in 'n professionele geselskap te werk.

Researcher: Dit word dan 'n soort apprenticeship?

MK: Ja. Deur my tegniese betrokkenheid vroeër het ek myself opgewerk en nou is ek amper heeltyds betrokke by FACTS – aan die administrasie en produksie kant.

Researcher : Kom ons praat befondsing – die kunstenaars wat by die geselskap betrokke is word uiteraard salarisse betaal – waar kom die geld vandaan?

MK: Dit het hoofsaaklik die afgelope paar jaar van die Nasionale Lottery af gekom en daar is ook by die NAC aansoek gedoen vir geld – die company is maar baie afhanklik van geld.

Maar dit is seker soos enige geselskap – as jy nie geld het nie kan jy nie produksies doen nie en of professionele akteurs betrek as mens hulle nie kan betaal nie.

Researcher : Om dit net so bietjie verder uit te pak: Die Drama Departement van die UV staan dan oorsigtelik in beheer van die geselskap maw. die departement gebruik sy infrastruktuur om aansoek te doen vir befondsing aan die een kant en aan die ander kant tree die departement op as produksiebestuurder. Mense binne die departement word dan gebruik om die privaat geselskap te assisteer om professionele produksies op die planke te bring.

MK: Partykeer word daar mense van buite ingebring – soos byvoorbeeld met *Die Huweliksaansoek* wat hulle vir Andre Stols ingekry het van Johannesburg af. Wat ook 'n funksie verrig want dan gee jy jou akteurs (veral jonger akteurs) die kans om met professionele akteurs van Johannesburg en Kaapstad in kontak te kom – met hulle te werk en ondervinding op te doen. Dit help ook vir hulle om bietjie networking te doen met mense wat die bedryf ken en soveel meer deure oop te maak.

Researcher : Hoe word produksies wat aangebied word geselekteer?

MK: Die regisseurs speel maar die grootste rol, maar ek weet byvoorbeeld die lottery het sekere vereistes soos daar moet “African” plays gedoen word met die geld wat van hulle af kom en daar was maatreels waarvolgens redelike artistieke vryheid gegee is maar daar moes van multikulturele casting gebruik gemaak word in die produksies – sodat dit nie net wit of swart word nie maar verteenwoordigend van aard.

Researcher : En het dit so gebeur?

MK: Ja dit het so gebeur, al die produksies wat ons aangebied het, het was multikultureel en die akteurs het baie lekker saamgewerk.

Researcher : So FACTS as 'n geselskap is 'n verteenwordegende geselskap wat vir almal (professionele akteurs in die Vrystaat) gelyke geleenthede bied?

MK: Ja, definitief.

Researcher : En vanwee sy betrokkenheid by die departement kry pas afgestudeerde studente dan geleenthede om plaaslike ervaring op te doen – wat hulle nie sou as FACTS nie bestaan het nie.

MK: Ja, daar word inderdaad baie geleenthede gebied – ek dink die geselskap verrig 'n onmisbare funksie.

Researcher : Hoe lank bestaan die geselskap?

MK: Ek dink dit is al 5 jaar? Ja, hulle het in my eerste jaar begin en dit was 5 jaar terug. Maar ek het eers van die 2de / 3de jaar ingekom.

Researcher : Ten spyte van die voorskrifte van die borge, is die oorgrote meerderheid werk wat die geselskap doen in Afrikaans.

MK: Ja.

Researcher : *In terme van die platform wat gebied word – die produksies word meestal by die dramadepartement aangebied? Word daar dus hoofsaaklik van die departement se fasiliteite gebruik gemaak?*

MK: Ja, ons verbondenheid aan die departement beteken dat die teaters vir ons beskikbaar is en bystand met die aanbied van die produksies verlaag dan kostes.

Dit bring mee dat ons meer geld oor het vir toere of om die produksies kunstefeeste toe te vat en so. Ons het gewoonlik 'n speelvak hier in Bloemfontein voordat ons dit na 'n fees toe vat – in ons teaters self.

Researcher : *Sou jy die feeste dan beskou as die eintlike platform? Maw. 'n produksie word hier (by die departement gekweek en ontwikkel – daar is instudeering en 'n speelvak in die departementele teaters en as deel van die departement se program van produksies en dan is daar blootstelling by feeste?*

MK: Ja, hoewel nie al die FACTS produksies vir kunstefeeste gekeur word nie. Want by die kunstefees is jy meer bloodgestel aan ander regisseurs van oor die land – en dan ook 'n wyer publiek wat dit sien – dit is vir die akteurs ook 'n geweldige ervaring – want dit is anders om in 'n teater in Bloemfontein te speel en om in 'n skoolsaal in Oudtshoorn te speel. Die akteurs leer ook daardie aanpasbaarheid.

Researcher : *Salarisgewys – word die akteurs vergoed vir 'n repitisienvak en 'n speelvak? Hetsy dit by die departement aangebied word of by 'n fees? So dit bly op 'n professionele grondslag bestuur?*

MK: Definitief, ja.

Researcher : *Ten opsigte van salarisse – as mens kyk na 'n gemiddelde produksie – die laaste twee produksies van FACTS waarby ek betrokke was “Dis ek Anna” en “Aspoestertjie” - dit was vir my interessant dat daar 'n verskil was in die benaderings met die twee kontrakte wat met my aangegaan is. By die een het ek 'n vaste salaris ontvang, en by die ander een was die inkomste afhanklik van verdeling van loketinkomste voordat enige geld aan my betaal is. Is die twee benaderings praktyk by FACTS en hoe word dit bepaal?*

MK: Wat met daardie tipe produksies gebeur is wanneer ons nie geld kry vir die produksies nie (NAC)– bied ons dit aan en deel dan die inkomste met die geselskap – waar befondsing verkry is, betaal ons salarisse. Sanlam het byvoorbeeld die produksie “Dis ek Anna” geborg, en daarmee kon hulle toe salarisse betaal. “Aspoestertjie” het geen borg gehad nie, maar omdat FACTS al 'n redelike reputasie vir hoe gehalte produksies (kindertoneel) opgebou het, het ons tog besluit om “Aspoestertjie” as 'n FACTS produksie aan te bied, al was dit nie om sigbaar by die publiek te bly.

Baie mense kom kyk eerder na 'n FACTS produksie wat hulle weet professioneel aangebied word eerder as 'n onbekende produksie waarvan hulle nie seker is nie. Die kwaliteit is al bekend.

Researcher : Produksiebegrotings hang seker af van die omvang en grote van 'n produksie?

MK: Ja, en hoeveel professionele akteurs betrokke is.

Researcher : FACTS het 'n baie vol jaar gehad – dit is 'n baie aktiewe geselskap.

Is jy bewus van ander soortgelyke geselskappe in die Vrystaat.

MK: Die enigste produksiehuis in die Vrystaat waarvan ek bewus is wat die aantal en die skaal van produksies aanbied is FACTS.

Researcher : Word daar enigsins van PACOFS en sy dienste gebruik gemaak?

MK: Ons gebruik die Garderobe – wat wonderlik is, as dit net beter bestuur was – maar daar is duisende kostuums. Décor gebruik ons minder – ons gebruik van die geverfde doeke – veral vir kinderproduksies – maar buiten daarvoor was ek nog nooit betrokke by PACOFS nie. Wat jammer is – daar is so wonderlike infrastruktuur wat gebruik kan word as daar dalk beter skakeling en beplanning tussen FACTS en hulle was

Researcher : So jy voel dit is 'n bestuursprobleem.

MK: Ek voel, en dis net my opinie – PACOFS moet maar heeltemal gesluit word – sy deure toemaak – stilstaan en dan 'n hele nuwe groep mense wat inkom wat in teater belangstel en wil werk.

Researcher : Ten spyte van jou opvatting van die bestuur van PACOFS – voel jy nog dat die fasiliteite redelik beskikbaar is.

MK: Ja. Ons maak van kostuums en decor gebruik en dit is beskikbaar.

Researcher : PACOFS het nog nooit 'n FACTS produksie aangebied nie?

MK: Nee.

Researcher : So die hoofsaaklike platform is die Departement en dan feeste eerder as PACOFS?

MK: Ja.

Researcher : As mens kyk na die mandate en die daarstelling van die Nasionale Kunsteraad, die herstrukturering van die uitvoerendekunsterade, die daarstelling van die fasiliteite van die rade as “Playhouses”, die NAC as 'n bron van befondsing vir uitvoerendekunsteprojekte en geselskappe, die ontstaan van privaat geselskappe, die ontstaan van die kunstefeeste – voel jy dat die visie wat daargestel is en gelei het tot al hierdie verskynsels – voel jy dit was suksesvol – voel jy meer kunstenaars word daardeur bevoordeel as in die ou bedeling – of voel jy daar is nog groot tekortkominge?

MK: Ek dink dit het gehelp – die infrastruktuur help kunstenaars – maar hulle kan net soveel mense help – jy stuur maar jou aansoek en hoop dat dit gekeur word – so dit bly maar onseker. Op die lange duur dink ek tog dit kan werk.

As mense vertrou raak met hoe dit werk – ek het baie vertrou dat dit uiteindelik sal werk – ek glo ons gaan weer 'n goeie tyd in teater beleef. FACTS is 'n goeie begin.

21. FACTS: Currently the largest Drama Company in the Free State

This chapter takes a closer look at what seems the most successful and sustainable semi-private drama company as compared to the former PACOFS drama. The required specialist opinion required therefore pertains to :

From conclusions drawn thus far it seems that although there are a number of structures in existence post the restructuring of the Performing Arts Council and as a result of Free State Artists now being necessitated to investigate a number of other platforms for performance outside of the Council versus the former situation where the Council (and its theatres and other facilities) were considered central to the activity of any artist performing drama work in the Free State.

This new exploration on the part of artists has also given rise to the development of new platforms – most noticeably the Arts Festivals which is in keeping with trends throughout the rest of the country.

Structures for funding are identified as primarily the National Arts Council, but an increasing number of productions are corporately sponsored – most notably Media 24 and the ATKV (Afrikaanse Taal en Kultuurvereniging) and the National Lottery. The existence of platforms for performance outside of the Council and the existence of funding structures outside of the Council could imply that drama practitioners could source funding, produce and stage productions without any regard for the Council or any necessity for assistance on its part whatsoever. Although it could be safely argued that the Arts Festivals certainly represent the biggest platform for performance, the festivals themselves make use of venues, facilities and services provided by PACOFS. This would seem to imply that PACOFS role as regards this assistance to local festivals is in keeping with the mandate prescribed by the White Paper.

The Volksblad Festival and MACUFE are two festivals for which PACOFS renders this kind of service and is indeed a key role-player for infrastructural and technical support. Perceptions on

the part of artists point to a dissatisfaction not so much with the existence of structures or lack thereof, but rather with their own relationship with these structures and their access to them. Artists attempt amongst themselves to call into existence small companies within which they themselves delegate tasks to individuals within the company to facilitate fund sourcing and access to platforms for the performance of their work – applications to funding structures and Arts festivals. It is with this aspect of the drama practitioners work that the biggest singular dissatisfaction among artists rests. From responses drawn in questionnaires and interviews contained in this dissertation the problem can be summed – up broadly as :

“ Artists feel that they are not entrepreneurs – they do not want to conceptualise structures, they do not necessarily want to form companies nor do they wish to be company administrators nor do they want to be fund-raisers– they don’t want to be fund administrators and they don’t want to be company managers – they want to be artists” (Luwes: 2009)

A structure such as FACTS therefore (similar to the Drama company within the former PACOFS) provides fulfillment of this need on the part of artists to a large extent. Artists are able to involve themselves with the activities of FACTS without concern for being involved in all the administrative tasks required to bring a production to the boards. FACTS has it taken care of. Artist feel free to simply concentrate on practicing their craft. This need is especially prevalent among previously disadvantaged artists who feel that they lack the necessary skill to facilitate access to funding, proposal writing and general administration and accountability for projects.

What emerges from a comparison between what the Performing Arts Councils were and what is in existence today is that artists who were involved with the previous councils felt that the council was a “haven” for artists where they were housed, salaried and where benefits like pensions and medical aids were provided for and they were only required to concentrate on the practice of their craft.

When one examines the immediate effect of the deconstruction of the former drama companies,

the Councils became “Playhouses” and artists were required to pursue structures like the National Arts Council to secure funding for their own projects based on their own initiatives and their own endeavours at bringing their projects to platforms for performance – whether at a “playhouse” or Arts Festival. No organisation is in existence to “take care” of artists and artists still consistently raise this need. Unless artists join a company like FACTS they are left to fend for themselves. In the Free State there are no such companies outside of FACTS which provide artists with this kind of “haven”.

No argument exists amongst artists as to the equal opportunity provided for by existing structures. However the equal opportunity structures like the National Arts Council seem to be under-utilised by artists when it comes to fund sourcing. A very small number of artists interviewed for the purposes of this paper made any attempt whatsoever to secure funding themselves from the NAC. Rather these artists accessed funding by way of professional fees and salaries through company structures like FACTS. This would point to an obvious need on the part of artists for such an organisation to which they can belong. Results from the artist survey contained in this paper would suggest that most artists express this desire.

The companies themselves also face challenges however, not least of which is the fact that these companies are run by people for whom fund sourcing and company management are not their sole occupation. If these people are not performing artists themselves, they tend to be members of academic institutions who provide this kind of assistance to the company in their free time. This is relevant to FACTS which, as a company, has its administrative activities handled by members of staff from the Free State University Drama Department. The activities of FACTS and the workload associated with running and administering productions for FACTS is over and above the departmental workload handled by these people.

A challenge facing companies therefore is having dedicated people who provide the infrastructure for the company so as to provide the “haven” for artists described above. As a result of non-assurance of grants salaries for such people cannot be guaranteed, and this may well be the reason for the lack of formalised structures in many small drama companies.

The securing of funding also influences the longevity of existence of these companies. Funding secured for a year from the NAC or the National Lottery provide project funding, which upon completion of projects cannot be assured for future projects. On-going fund securing for projects seems the only way of perpetuating work for members of the company, but without dedicated people committed to securing the funding, future projects are not assured.

In terms of the coming into existence of FACTS, the funder (The National Lottery) required formation of a company in order for funding to be allocated. This saw to a formalized structure for a drama company called FACTS coming into existence. A section 21 company was formed, which initially required money – no seeding money was available for this purpose initially. This poses a problem for especially previously disadvantaged and poorer artist to access funding in the first place. The CEO of PACOFS at the time of FACTS inception, Dr Nathan Bagarette, provided FACTS with R6000.00 to start a company with a view to a collaboration between FACTS and PACOFS to facilitate productions which would make use of PACOFS facilities, thereby providing a working relationship in line with the PACOFS mandate. According to Luwes no real “samewerking” ensued and FACTS was forced to pursue other venue options for the staging of its productions. This relationship was not successful.

22. The Professional Company Concept

The following interview constitutes perceptions regarding professional drama in the Free State by one of the longest standing practitioners of Free State Theatre.

As the former Artistic Director of the (then) PACOFS Drama company and Artistic Director of the privatized Drama Company, the Free State Ensemble as well as a director, actor and active participant in professional drama activities in the province for many years, Gerben Kamper is probably best positioned in his current position as Senior Lecturer at the Drama department at the University of the Free State to comment from an extremely experienced vantage point.

Perhaps the company concept is the element artists express as being most missed with the closure of the nationally recognized professional companies, according to general conclusions the researcher has been able to draw from this study. Aspiration to a Nationally recognized company can be compared to a National sports team and does provide a form of recognition for artists at the top of their profession. ✓

It could be argued that within the old structures the core of the artists endeavors were in service not only of the production or work at hand, but also of the company itself.

Apart from the sense of belonging described earlier in this dissertation by Accone, the term "Company Life" could be said to be what actors desire most.

As Sarah Urech describes it :

"From the time I first began participating in theatre, I loved being part of a collective of people who came together to create something."

(Urech, 1996: 1)

Since practicing theatre on a professional level appears to be as much about a certain lifestyle as it is about producing work, the following is also illuminating regarding this relationship :

“As I have spent time with this topic, I have come to believe that a group which is conscious of the life of the group will have a certain level of cohesion. Like in a functional family, members must identify with the family as an entity which is different from any of the individual people or their relationships with each other.

On the other end of the spectrum, I imagine a professional theatre company coming together for a production; the members are 100% work-oriented. Everyone is encouraged to "leave their shit outside the door" when attending rehearsals. There will, of course, *be* company life. For example, the director pays special attention to certain actors, perhaps for personal reasons. This will have its effect on all members of the company and hence on the work. Or an actor may get sick the day before performance, and certain members will be better equipped to stomach the crisis than others, who shift gears to survival mode. Again, this will have an influence on the product (which is in this case the reason for the group's existence). Occurrences of this nature make up company life yet may go unnoticed or unattended.”

(Urech, 1996: 7)

22.1 The interview and the company concept.

The following transcription of the interview is supplied to provide the reader with an impression of a specialist viewpoint on the company concept as it relates to Free State artists.

Om mee te begin wil ek eintlik my laaste vraag eerste stel en daar is 'n goeie rede hiervoor. Deur die hele Magisterstudie wat ek hier aangepak het, het dit redelik duidelik geblyk dat al die gegewens rondom die herstrukturering van die Kunsterade en kunstebedeling in Suid-Afrika apart staan van die internasionaal erkende konsep van 'n geselskap. Dié begrip is nogal belangrik omdat dit dié konsep was, wat in die eerste plek gelei het, tot die stigting van vaste geselskappe vir toneel uit die destydse NTO (Nasionale Toneelorganisasie).

Dit is die hoofrede vir die onderhoud. Om dié konsep duideliker te omskryf vir die doeleindes van dié studie. Ons is geneig om te voel dat ons gekom het van 'n bedeling waar die geselskap beskou is as die kern van die toneel uitvoerende kunstenaar se bedrywighede en dat die dekonstruksie van dié strukture daartoe gelei het, dat al die akteurs wat in geselskappe betrokke was uiteindelik vryskutkunstenaars geword het. Dié kunstenaars het begin gebruik maak van die platforms tot hulle beskikking soos kunstefeeste. My vraag is dus: Wat het met geselskappe gebeur? Dit blyk dat daar nog 'n behoefte is onder kunstenaars om deel te wees van 'n geselskap. Wat is die plek van 'n geselskap? Hoe gaan toneel en die toekoms van die toneelakteur (beroepsspeler) vorentoe lyk? Ek bly verwys na toneelspeler want ek wil hom graag onderskei van die operasanger en kabaretkunstenaar. Die vraag klink miskien omslagtig maar ek wou graag jou ervaring deel t.o.v wat gebeur het met die Geselskappedagte. Daar moes tog 'n transformasie daarvan gewees het? Jy het aan die hoof gestaan van 'n erkende Nasionale geselskap as Artistieke Direkteur van die SUKOVS Toneelgeselskap.

GK: Ek dink die idee van die geselskap het nooit verdwyn nie. Dit is as gevolg van befondsing (probleme) dat hulle so verklein het en dat die gedagte by 'n paar individue bly voort leef het. Dié idee van 'n geselskap.

En dus het mense (professioneel) soos Marthinus Basson en Antoinette Kellerman met “Vleis Rys en Aartappels” nog die basiese toneelgeselskap behou. Maar in 'n baie kleiner vorm, met net drie of vier permanente lede waar die ander kunstenaars per produksie nader getrek word. Ons het dit probeer met Vrystaat Ensemble, ek en jy. 'n Kern groep van vier of vyf spelers, plus 'n regisseur wat ons dan ander mense by betrek het.

Die groot probleem dink ek, in die land op die oomblik, is dat ons nog te geselekteerd dink wat teater betref. Daar is nie 'n Suid Afrikaanse toneelgeselskap nie. Dit bestaan nie!

Daar is miskien 'n swart of Zulu toneelgeselskap, of 'n wit geselskap met swart lede soos “Vleis Rys en Aartappels”, maar daars nie werklik 'n nasionale geselskap nie. (pause) Dis waarheen ons moet teruggaan...

na amper 'n nasionale toneelgeselskap wat bestaan uit mense vanuit die land... swart, bruin, wit ... maak nie saak nie... dit hang alles af van talent.

Op die oomblik dink ons, in my mening te veel in terme van Engelse toneel, Afrikaanse toneel, Afrikaanse toneel net by feeste, waar groepies van "Egoli" byvoorbeeld bymekaarkom en 'n toneelstuk opvoer as 'n geselskap. Die "Egoli" geselskap of die "Sewende Laan" geselskap, of mense daaruit of dan Marthinus (Basson) hulle, of Vrystaat Ensemble...maak nie saak nie.

Dan FACTS soos wat ons hier tans by die universiteit het, dit is ook nogal 'n nuwe tendens en dit gebeur nogal met Vleis Rys en Aartappels ook. Dat beide Marthinus (Basson) en Antoinette (Kellerman) by die Universiteit van Stellenbosch betrokke is, waar hulle ook klas gee net soos ek. Die ooreenkoms tussen ons en Nico (Luwes) hulle wat by FACTS betrokke is, is dat ons studente en fasiliteite van die Drama Departemente kan gebruik om te oorleef, anders kan jy nie. Daar is net géén platform vir geselskappe sonder befondsing nie. So, my groot pleidooi en ek dink as ek KKNK begin reg lees, is dit die rigting waarin hulle begin beweeg. Dat hulle meer Nasionaal geïntegreerde geselskappe daar wil stel, soos wat Grahamstad (Nasionale Kunstefees) eintlik al jare doen. Grahamstad ignoreer net die Afrikaanse drama heeltemal. Dit is vir my 'n jammerte en ek weet nie hoe ons dit gaan oorbrug nie. Maar die idee van 'n geselskap bly vir my die belangrikste. Eintlik gebeur nagraadse of latere toneelopleiding in 'n geselskap. En daardie opleiding hou nooit op nie.

Die jongmense leer van die ouer akteurs en die ouer geslag leer weer van die jongmense... en daars 'n kruisbestuiwing. Dit is nie net 'n ding van ons moet iets op die verhoog kry om geld te maak by 'n fees nie. Daar's 'n hele kreatiewe proses wat oor jare heen ontwikkel...en dit het ons nie meer op die oomblik nie.

Researcher: Die konsep van vaste geselskappe soos ons dit geken het, binne die ou Streekrade bedeling is ontbind sodat 'n wyer spektrum van kunstenaars kon baat vind by die kunstebefondsing uit die geld wat voorheen daargestel is vir die sogeaamde "elite" vastegeselskappe. Die vraag ontstaan, het dit gebeur? Het 'n groter basis van kunstenaars voordeel daaruit getrek? En die kort antwoord is, ja. Daar is probleme binne daardie stelsel.

Die nuwe stelsels (na transformasie) veronderstel dat kunstenaars bevoeg is om 'n aansoek te rig, 'n begroting op te stel, oor finansiële kennis, bestuurskennis, kennis van projekbestuur, die vermoë het om befondsing reg te bestuur, asook die boekhouding daarvan te doen. Amper asof die kunstenaar 'n entrepreneur en bestuurder moet wees. En baie ouens is dit nie. Die meeste is gewoon om 'n teks te hê en dit is dit... dis jou verpligting... jy is in diens van die produksie en die produksie is al waarmee jy jou hoef te bemoei! Maar nou moet jy 'n administratiewe persoon word.

GK: En die hele ideë van die Witskrif... was 'n edele ideë, maar het nie met die realiteit tred gehou nie. Hulle wou eintlik die kunstenaar bemagtig...dit was die ideë...weg van administrasie, weg van geboue ensovoorts. Hulle word bemagtig deur die befondsing, maar hulle moet dit lei en bestuur.

Ons (kunstennars) kan voorgee ons kan met geld werk en ons kan met begrotings en BTW werk... dit werk nie in die praktyk so nie. 'n Administratiewe persoon behoort dan aangestel te word om daardie tipe werk te doen. Deesdae gebeur dit al hoe meer. Ek het nou die dag na 'n stuk van Gibson Kente gekyk waat hy net voor sy dood geskryf het. Hulle het dit weer opgevoer. Onthou jy vir Sam? Hy is nou soort van in beheer van Gibson se geselskap. (Gibson Kente had three companies of actors, "by 1974 the performers in his three companies earned four times a factory worker's wage" (Banham: 2004). Dis nóg 'n geselskap wat steeds bly, al is Gibson dood. Wat wonderlik is! Ek het so bietjie met hulle gesels toe hulle hier by die André Huguenet was. Daar is bietjie befondsing vir hulle...so onderlangs gebeur daar wel werk van goeie gehalte en substansie, as mens kyk na Grahamstad, maar die grootste fout en dink dis dalk my fout ook. Ek dink nog vreeslik sterk uit 'n Afrikaanse oogpunt en wat die Afrikaanse komponent van toneel- en toneelspelers betref, gaan dit eintlik afwaarts in plaas van op.

Researcher: *Die finale vraag wat ek wil vra is, ek het nou geraak aan die gedagte agter die Witskrif en die gedagte agter die nuwe mandaat wat die rade moet aanneem. Regeringsmandaat is om beskikbare befondsing vir die uitvoerende kunste vir so wye basis van kunstenaars as moontlik beskikbaar te stel. En soos jy tereg gesê het, om die kunstenaar daardeur te bemagtig. Sou jy sê die Vrystaat is in 'n unieke posisie? Hier verwys ek na kunstenaars wat in die vorige bedeling relatief baie semi-permanent by die Drama departement betrek was en 'n interaksie met die departement gehad het wat nou glad nie meer bestaan nie. Hierdie is nou mense wat verkies om in die Vrystaat te bly, maar wat glad nie meer 'n platform het nie. Ouens wat aangewese is op befondsing van die Nasionale Kunsteraad en die bestuur van hulle eie projekte,*

die daarstelling van hulle eie projekte, hulle eie reëlings met kunstefeeste moet tref, om platforms tot hulle beskikking te gebruik. MACUFE (Mangaung Cultural Festival), wat poog om 'n verhouding met PACOFS op te bou, om sodoende van hulle fasiliteite gebruik te maak. Wat die mandaat eintlik is en wat nie met groot sukses plaas vind nie. Sou jy sê die Vrystaat is in 'n unieke posisie? Ek wil jou nie lei nie, maar ten opsigte van hierdie kunstenaars lê die uniekheid nie daarin opgesluit, dat daar in die Vrystaat, anders as in die ander groter stede soos Johannesburg en Kaapstad nie verwante industrië soos film en televisie is nie?

GK: Inderdaad dink ek as jy na mense soos Babes Mphatseng en Maria de Koker (local artists who worked for the former PACOFS Drama) verwys, is hulle slegter daaraan toe as vroeër. Daar is nie 'n ander industrië hier (Free State) nie. Ek het nou gesê Afrikaans, maar gelukkig gaan ons Afrikaanse werk voort, deur die universiteit (UFS) en die Sanlamprys. Ons kan nog die standaard handhaaf, ook deur bv. nagraadse studente te betrek by produksies. Maar nou kyk ons amper na onself en ons gaan soek nie spesifiek stukke waarin ons Babes en Maria kan betrek nie, want ons het ons eie swart studente wat ook wil speel, al is dit in Afrikaans of Sesotho of wat ook al. Maar met wat vroeër gebeur het in Vrystaat Ensemble, kon ons 'n "Boesman en Lena" doen met Babes en Maria. Wat vir hulle geleentheid gebied het om in hulle beroepe bietjie vastigheid te kry, bietjie te ontwikkel.

Researcher: *Om te werk, om bloot te werk? Waar laat dit plaaslike kunstenaars?*

GK: Ja, en as ek kyk wat by PACOFS gebeur. Dat daar meer kunstenaars uit Johannesburg hier 'n draai kom gooi...

Researcher: *En dat Pacofs as impressario optree?*

GK: Ja.

Researcher: *Dit is hulle mandaat. Hulle wyk nie daarvan af deur as impressario op te tree nie?*

GK: Wat my tog opval...en goed...jy moet 'n artistieke persoon daar hê om besluite te neem van watter produksies geskik is. Ek is tog 'n bietjie bekommerd dat daardie artistieke besluite nie altyd tot voordeel van die Vrystaat is nie.

Dit voel vir my meer... en ek huiwer om dit te sê...dat besluite uit 'n politieke oogpunt geneem word.

Researcher: Goed, heel laaste vraag. Die punte waaraan ek wou raak, die vastegeselskap idee, die dekonstruksie van die hele Uitvoerende kunsteraad struktuur van vroeër, en die gevolge daarvan vir uitvoerende kunstenaars, en die kunstenaars self. Dit uit het die studie geblyk (uit hul eie ervaring), wat hulle graag wou sien verander. Soos wat die veranderinge hulself nou uitgespeel het, wat sou jy in terme van al hierdie veranderinge sê? Die geselskap idee? Kunstenaars wat nou slegter daaraan toe is? Die feeste wat die nuwe platform geword het? Wegbeweeg van die stadsteater, of die staatsteater? Die jonger geselskappe wat opkom? Die nuwe kunstenaars wat afstudeer? Die "Vleis, Rys en Aartappels" gedagte? Klein kern geselskappe? Wat sou jy aflei uit al die gegewens, uit hierdie hele nuwe rigting wat toneel ingeslaan het in Suid Afrika? Wat sou jou grootste aanbeveling wees vir die Nasionale Kunsteraad wat nou gaan sit en kyk miskien na 'n nuwe Witskrif?

GK: Ek het 'n idee en ek loop nou al baie lank met hierdie idee, en dit is dat 'n mens weer amper begin streekgebonde werk. Nie soos vroeër nie, maar dat jy tog 'n PACOFS het. Jy het tog die basiese strukture daar, wat jy geselskappe mee kan aan die gang hou. Wat ek sou voorstel is dat hulle landswyd begin kyk. Kyk nou na die kern van die land waar PACOFS hier is, waar die hoofsaaklike taal wat gepraat word Afrikaans is met Sotho by en 'n bietjie Engels.

Die gedagte is dat dit plaaslik werk wat dan bydra tot 'n groter Nasionale geselskap en dat komponente wat die werk van die Nasionale geselskap uitmaak vanuit die streeke kom. Daar's jou Afrikaanse komponent (hier) byvoorbeeld met jou Sesotho en Engels by. So kyk jy na Gauteng wat hoofsaaklik na Engelse werk kyk. Gaan jy na KZN het hulle hulle eie werk. So kry jy in die Kaap ook hulle werk in watter tale ookal. Dan, elke Streekraad doen sy eie werk vir vier maande van die jaar en is plaaslik gehuisves. Vir die res van die jaar toer die geselskappe rond dwarsdeur die land. So die hele land kry 'n idee van 'n Nasionale toneelorganisasie wat bestaan uit verskeie streeksgevoerde komponente, wat dan Afrikaans, Engels, Sesotho, Zulu, alles insluit. En so skep jy 'n nuwe teater, maar met 'n Suid -Afrikaanse identiteit.

23. Other Free State Professional Drama Companies.

23.1 Aspris Productions

A recent addition (2008) to the private drama companies in the Free State is Aspris Productions .

Aims and objectives of the company:

- a. To write/develop, direct professional children theatre productions per year with professional directors, professional designers and professional local actors, with degrees or post graduate degrees in Drama and Theatre Arts in the Wynand Mouton, Scaena Theatre and Rehearsal Room, UFS Campus, at Pacofs theatres and during the KKNK, Aardklop, and Volksblad Festival in Bloemfontein, in accordance with the approved budgets obtained from the NAC and other sponsors.
- b. Touring productions to major Free State centers like Welkom, Kroonstad, Sasolburg and Bethlehem if financially possible.
- c. To safeguard the, and promote the professional occupations of up and coming Free State dramatists, stage directors, actors and technical theatre artisans.

Membership

- a. Only persons currently studying a B.A Drama and Theatre Arts degree or obtained such mentioned degree or post graduate degree in that field or persons with at least 3 years professional experience may become member to ensure the artistic standard of productions.
- b. A Yearly membership of R50.00 is payable.

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- c. membership fees after one month following a written request from the chairperson.

Funds and accounts:

- a. Funds raised by the association, like membership fees, general sponsorships and ticket income will be deposited into a bank account under the associations' name for sound financial control and formal audited reports for the yearly project(s).
- b. These funds must only be used for the specific project.
- c. No funds may be used for the buying of fixed assets. All funds must be used for specific projects according to the proposed and allocated budgets for the production(s).
- d. Financial responsibility is centered in the leader of that specific project.
- e. A 15% infrastructure fee must be included in all proposals for funding. 5% is payable to the project developer, 5% is payable for banking and auditing infrastructure and 5% must be kept in the account for the development of future productions or as the members of the association see fit.
- f. All requests for cheques or monies must be approved by the company chairperson.
- g. The auditors of the association must provide to sponsors and the members of the organization financial statements one month after completion of the production.
- h. The financial year of the association starts on the 1st of March and ends on 28 February each year.

PRODUCTIONS AND NOTES:

PRODUCTION	NO OF PROFESSIONAL ACTORS INVOLVED
Enigiemand vir Ontbyt	5
My Liewe Meneer Malan	5

23.2 V Productions

The researcher conducted an interview with the founder of the latest Professional Drama company to be established in Bloemfontein, Dr Pieter Venter, also Senior Lecturer at the department of Drama and Theatre Studies at the University of the Free State.

Findings and insights gained regarding the establishment, rationale for co-existence with other Drama Companies like FACTS are forthcoming from the interview. Again, as elsewhere in this dissertation, a transcription of the interview is supplied to provide the reader with a perceptive impression.

Researcher : The specialist opinion required in this part of the study pertains to : V Productions was formed as a result of an identified desire on the part of artists that you identified to belong to a company.

PV : Die groot probleem is – mense wat klaar studeer, wat is die toekoms vir hulle? Die company is begin om vir mense 'n platform te gee. Ons het klein begin met 'n one woman show : “Impi”.

Ons het aansoek gedoen by Arts Trust (Kunstetrust) en seeding geld gekry om salarisse te betaal.

Researcher : Mag ek vra hoeveel geld julle gekry het?

PV: Ja, ons het R25 000 gekry, start up geld om te begin toer. Daaruit het ons mense gehad wat met “Impi” getoer het en hulle huur betaal, petrol ingooi, en dan het elke toer vir homself begin betaal. Ons het met feeste gewerk op 'n 60/40 box office split, en in sommige gevalle is die produksies gekoop deur die feeste. Uit “Impi” het “Boer Manie” gekom, ons het op die fees gespeel (Volksblad Kunstefees) en toe begin toer. Die inkomste word gesplit – na die spelers toe en na die company toe, wat dan 'n basis behou vir produksiekoste. Die klem is daarop dat die mense moet uitgaan en die produksies bemark, hulle eie opportunities skep om die produksies aan te bied, by skole, klein feeste – Bothaville, Welkom, Kroonstad. Toe doen ons aansoek by die NAC en kry toe geld vir 'n jaar.

Researcher : Mag ek weer vra hoeveel geld dit was?

PV : Ons het R100 000 gekry vir 'n jaar. Die geld is nodig as buffer as die produksies nie die box office inkomste inbring wat dit moet nie.

Researcher : Dis 'n belangrike verskil tussen huidige privaat geselskappe en voormalig Staatsgesubsidieerde Toneelgeselskappe. Streeksraad companies kon enige werk doen wat hulle wou, artistiek bevredigende, uitdagende werk omdat hulle glad nie oor loketinkomste bekommerd was nie.

PV: Ja, die verskil is dat die kunstenaar goed moet doen wat geld inbring en baie harder werk aan die bemarking daarvan.

Researcher: Maak V produksies enigsins gebruik van PACOFS, hetsy as fasiliteerder of as Playhouse vir enige van julle produksies?

PV : Die probleem is dat hulle dienste te duur is om van gebruik te maak. Die dienste en ruimtes wat hulle aanbied is nie vir sulke klein companies bekostigbaar nie. Dan is beplanning ook 'n probleem, om die klein company se beplanning te laat inpas by PACOFS s'n is onmoontlik.

Selfs die rehearsal space is te duur. Nee ons kan nie PACOFS bekostig nie en hulle kan ons nie akkomodeer nie – die NAC cover ook nie al daardie koste nie.

23.1 V- Productions, Production Analysis:

Production period: February to October 2009

PRODUCTION	NO. OF ACTORS INVOLVED
Impi	1
Boer Manie	5
Rugby: The Gayme	1
Scoonlief en die Ondier	7

Production Cost: R 18 000.00

Main Funders: Arts Trust, National Arts Council

24. Comparison of Professional Annual Drama Production Programmes: The last year of PACOFS Drama, the first year of Free State Ensemble and one year of FACTS.

24.1 PACOFS Drama: the last Production Year

Although a number of other productions appear in this report from the PACOFS Drama annual report, only those produced by PACOFS Drama have been included, ie. outside productions hosted and not produced by PACOFS Drama have been omitted.

<u>Production</u>	<u>No. of Perf.</u>	<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>Income</u>
Little Red Riding Hood - Bfn.	6	775	5310	1152
Maru	10	1612	12830	8491
Black Age	10	1413	143313	5180
Puppet Theatre (Risky)	73	82145	35866	41583
Die Pakkamer	13	608	23388	1291
Pinnocchio	32	10344	112425	72792
My Children, My Africa	9	658	49855	3822
Donkersmart	6	776	99405	unknown
Total	159 482 392			

(PACOFS Annual Report, 1996/1997)

24.2 Free State Ensemble: the first Production Year

<u>Production</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>No. of Perf.</u>	<u>No. Of Actors</u>	<u>Sponsor</u>	<u>Production Budget</u>
Donkersmart (Die Movie)	21,22 March and 16 Apr – 3 May 1997	14	9	PACOFS / Belgian Government	99 405
Agnes van ons Liewe Heer	9 – 24 May 1997	12	3	PACOFS	33 843
Scrooge	3 – 24 December	15	5	PACOFS	28 800

(FREE STATE ENSEMBLE BACK-UP FILES, 1997)

24.3 FACTS : One full Production Year 2007 / 2008

Production	Date	No. of Perf.	No. Of Actors	Sponsor	Production Budget
Skerp-Sin	5-8 Apr 2007	4	9	National Lottery	200 904
Hegter	10 – 15 Jul 2007	6	4	National Lottery	52 420
Pinnocchio	11-14 Jul 25-29 Sep 2007	4	12	National Lottery	83 220
Maaltyd vir Een	11-14 Jul 2007	4	3	National Lottery	51 526
Little Shop of Horrors	3-8 Dec 2007	6	13	National Lottery	350 000
Die Huweliksaansoek	14-16 Feb 2008	3	3	National Lottery	68 166
					806 237

(FACTS Report to National Lottery, 2008).

24.4 Comparison of Free State Drama Companies' Production Years

	PACOFS Drama	Free State Ensemble	FACTS
No. of Productions produced :	8	3	6
Language/s			
Afrikaans	2	3	5
English	2	0	1
Multilingual	4	0	0
Funders	PACOFS	PACOFS / Belgian Government.	National Lottery
No. of Actors	28 involved in these productions – permanent company + free-lance	17	44 roles in these plays
No. of Performances	159	41	27
Annual Production Cost	R 482 392	162 048	806 237

25. Has Transformation of the Free State Performing Arts Council, PACOFS, benefitted local Artists. Perceptions of local Actors more than 10 years after restructuring?

25.1 Interview with Free State Resident Actors : Babes Mphatseng and Maria de Koker.

25.1.1 Background to the Interview:

During the filming of a corporate video in December of 2007, the researcher worked with both Babes Mphatseng and Maria de Koker. On this occasion the researcher conducted an informal focused group interview with both artists during breaks on set. Both these actors have a long standing professional working history with the researcher, both as free lance actors and as former actors involved with the then PACOFS Drama department. Since both these actors are actively involved in community drama development activities, both in Heidedal and Rocklands in Bloemfontein, and since both actors are award winning professional actors (Ms. de Koker recently appeared in the daily Soap Opera, Egoli), the researcher wished to learn from them whether or not they had benefitted from the restructuring of the PAC in the Free State.

25.1.2 Selection of Respondents:

The selection of these two artists was based on the fact that both are Free State resident professionals, that both are qualified in terms of being the right target artists to have benefitted from the restructuring of PACOFS. In addition both these artist are involved in community drama development activities, a function previously provided for by resident companies within the councils.

25.1.3 Aim and focus of the Interview:

The researcher's intention here was to gauge very simply whether or not these actors, as residents in the Free State, had more work prior to restructuring of PACOFS than the present. The purpose of the interview was also to determine whether or not these artists made use of current structures (NAC for Funding and PACOFS for facilitating) or not.

25.1.4 Summarized Findings:

Findings from the interview can be summarized as follows:

- Regarding whether or not more work was available to these artists within the former PACOFS structure, both artists are unanimous: they definitely worked more within the old structure.
- Both however mention that besides the number of opportunities available to them through the then PACOFS Drama department, that both felt the department provided them with a base, a home and an advisory body for work both within and outside of the department and that this was no longer the case. This despite the fact that the present PACOFS had created experimental theatre workspaces for avant-garde work.
- The fact that they are not able to access these facilities effectively is ascribed to a breakdown in communication between themselves and the PACOFS management responsible for approving access to these structures.
- As regards NAC funding, both artist have submitted applications to the NAC and have had successful funding applications, but it seems successive applications were hampered by the fact that insufficient reporting following the projects was submitted to the NAC.
- Both artist feel that actors are not equipped to constantly source funding or administrate it and that the task of initiating projects together with the demands of funding structures is a bewildering task for one artist.
- As regards companies, they are involved with community arts development projects for which private and government funding is available, but that the securing of such funding is also hampered by red tape.
- Both artists feel that the then PACOFS Drama department was closer to them than what the NAC is today. This seems to be in support of what Ms. Doreen Nthetha had to say on the subject :

“The National Arts Council of South Africa is set up as an "arms-length" organisation. This means that, in theory, the NAC can decide who and what to promote. In a democracy this is no problem, but where there is a weakness on the government side arms-length becomes a problem because for the policy to succeed there should be strong government policies which are recognised nationally. Arms-length requires stable policies and a vision that is clearly enunciated.”

(National Department of Arts and Culture Website: www.dac.gov.za, 2005).

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- It seems, according to both respondents that especially in the Free State, that this relationship is too far removed for local artists to really benefit.
- They do not feel that restructuring has benefitted them, and as “surviving on the bread-line” artists that their working conditions have improved.³

“While other workers have seen a drastic improvement in their working conditions, with vulnerable workers such as domestic workers and farm labourers enjoying special attention, artists have not seen very many changes that have provided them with great employment security, nor a social security net, or even minimum wages, making them still completely vulnerable to exploitation.”

(National Department of Arts and Culture Website: www.dac.gov.za, 2005).

26. ARTS POLICY GOING FORWARD

Challenges with today's actual situation:

There is an oversupply of labour - e.g. there are too few theatres to enable all actors in the country to work consistently throughout the year.

The intermittent and seasonal nature of some industries (e.g. television commercial industry that operates mainly in summer), and the dependence on public funding bodies that administer funds poorly, mean that artists have to find other forms of generating income.

In general, some artists need to resort to another form of gainful employment. There are no figures available for this generally, but recent research into the theatre industry found that less than 25% of actors make their living from theatre alone.

Younger artists may engage in waitressing, modeling and advertising while older artists find supplementary income in teaching, the communications and PR industries and tourism. Many also – often reluctantly – engage in arts administration work that generates some income when they are not working as artists.

(National Department of Arts and Culture Website: www.dac.gov.za, 2005).

The role of the State in improving the conditions of artists

After the country's first non-racial, democratic elections in 1994, the new government embarked on a progressive consultation process with the arts community regarding the formulation and management of a new arts and culture dispensation. This led to the adoption of the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage in 1996, which today remains .

(National Department of Arts and Culture Website: www.dac.gov.za, 2005).

The Department of Arts and Culture held a workshop at the Sandton Convention Centre early in May 2008 as part of the policy review process. This process will produce a comprehensive report that covers the following issues:

- * The objectives of the White Paper on Arts, Culture and Heritage (1996)
- * Challenges over the first decade of democracy (1994-2007)
- * Achievements over first decade of democracy (1994 – 2007)

- * Policy Gaps: What the policy and legislative framework does not cover
- * New developments, as well as present and future challenges
- * Changing needs: Policy Direction for the next decade (2007 to 2017)
- * Aligning the White Paper with the current government framework
- * Aligning to the present Arts and Culture needs.
- * Development of an Arts and Culture Plan for the 2007 to 2017

This Workshop was attended by Government officials from all spheres and delegates from Arts and Culture institutions, as well as other stakeholders from civil society. To enrich this process and generate debate, academics and other cultural experts were invited to make presentations. Speakers from abroad revealed how other countries manage arts and culture in their countries.

The DACST website does not reveal if and when a new White Paper on Arts and Culture can be expected and comments on ten years post-restructuring:

“ Nearly ten years after the adoption of the White Paper though, very little has changed with regard to labour relations, taxation, remuneration, social security and the general working conditions of artists. If anything, some would argue that these have declined in the last ten years. Certainly it is not yet the case that “artists...enjoy their right to freedom of expression in a relatively secure working environment and with the same protection enjoyed by other workers.”

(National Department of Arts and Culture Website: www.dac.gov.za, 2005).

27. Conclusions and Final Perspectives

This dissertation set out to examine the effect of the restructuring of the Performing Arts Council in the Free State, more than 10 years after transformational inception under Dr. Nathan Bagarette, the then CEO of the new PACOFS, on Professional Drama in the Province.

In order to assess this, a history of the formalization of professional drama companies and their integration into what historically became the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa has been described in the opening chapters of this dissertation.

Findings from this historical description :

- Defines the role of PACOFS in professional drama pre-restructuring.
- The description demonstrates the dominant position of drama in Performing Arts Councils and provides some insights into the rationale behind the need for redression of Performing Arts Policy in South Africa.

Findings from the historical study confirm the dominant position of Drama Companies within the old PAC structures and reinforce the desire on the part of professional practitioners to belong to a recognized professional body through the establishment of these companies within the PACs. The brief history provided supplies a sense of the role-players in early establishment of PACOFS Drama and provides some inclination as to the socio-political climate of the time.

An examination of the early PACOFS mandate and of post restructuring mandates and the respective effects of these mandates on role-players as well as PACOFS compliance with these mandates renders the following findings:

- The Early PACOFS mandate was designed to foster and protect the elitist position Drama Companies within the early PACs had both striven for and achieved.
- Early mandates provided PACs with generous State funding and ensured that they did what they were supposed to – that is to cultivate and advance white, mostly Afrikaans so called “Euro-centric elitist theatre”.

The study devotes a chapter to a brief discussion around the criticism leveled at PAC Drama departments as the elitist companies described. Interviews with artists regarding this criticism found that:

- Elitism within companies within the PACs did not exist since the PACOFS Drama company was representative in both artist profile and work undertaken.
- According to artists, much of the Protest theatre work and anti-apartheid dramas were forthcoming from within the departmental work being undertaken by the PACS prior to closure.
- Elitism of companies within PACs was largely a perception on the part of artists outside of these structures.

This paper was concerned with a comparative view of Free State Drama post closing of the PACOFS Drama Department. An examination of the activities of the PACOFS Drama Department was therefore pertinent.

Findings were:

- By comparison to private drama companies it does appear as if the Old PACOFS Drama was "lavishly funded". However, the magnitude of the work undertaken by the department, or the scale at which productions were presented by PACOFS Drama in formal theatres cannot be compared with work done by private companies for the sparse technical proficiency provided for at festivals.
- PACOFS Drama was the only resident Drama company to apply for privatization from PACOFS as per the stipulations of the White Paper on Arts and Culture to form an independent Drama Company called Free State Ensemble and to take up residence in a former PACOFs run theatre.

A chapter concerned with an examination of the stipulations of the White Paper renders the following findings:

- Although the focus of the White paper was to provide for the right sizing of PAC infrastructure and opening of their facilities to a broader spectrum of arts practitioners, and although much of

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- the PAC transformation that occurred subsequent to the White Paper 's publication was in line with this focus, perceptions forthcoming from artists do not point to a greater accessibility to PAC facilities or infrastructure.

The first privatized drama company to come into existence following closure of PACOFS Drama, Free State Ensemble is examined in terms of privatization initiative, organizational structure, funding and work proposed and undertaken is described.

This research chapter devoted to examination of the privatized PACOFS Drama department found the following:

- Free State Ensemble was the only successfully privatized PAC Drama department in the country.
- Free State Ensemble's ambitious association production plan with PACOFS was never realized.
- Free State Ensemble was not the successful production company it had hoped to be and began transforming into an impresario to keep its theatre running.
- Free State Ensemble was not able to sustain its activities due to lack of accessible funding.

The study then sets out to examine the effect of the redression of Arts policy on artists and professional drama companies in the Free State, and provides for a contextual background to Arts Funding within the Performing Arts Councils and the new funding avenues available to artists since redression, by way of:

- Definition of Old Performing Arts Council funding formula.
- Defining criteria for National Arts Council funding application today.

Findings are that funding, in principle, is available to a wider and more representative base of drama practitioners than was previously provided for under PAC formulas for funding.

Findings are for funding criteria, however, to have the potential to exclude certain artists on the grounds of :

- Records of previous project successes may not be applicable to first time applicants.
- Applications require an artistic as well as a business acumen to ensure successful application.

- Not all artists are necessarily equipped with the kind of business acumen required to ensure a successful application. Application criteria assumes a fairly advanced level of entrepreneurial ability on the part of artists applying for project funding. Performing art is interpretative by nature and the skills required are not administrative or entrepreneurial.

Having described the avenues and criteria for fund accessing, the study examines perceptions on the part of artists regarding NAC funding and structures in place for accessing funding. Findings were:

- Artists generally feel secure and comfortable about describing their artistic vision and ability but feel describing it within space allowed on official forms is limiting.
- Similarly creativity, vision, imagination and originality are sometimes difficult to express in writing – especially for performing artists who prefer vocalisation above written description.
- A record of an ability to manage and complete projects or studies is sometimes difficult for first time applicants to obtain.
- Artists do not always feel their projects or productions will likely have National impact – and this seems to be an intimidating expectation.
- A general feeling of insecurity over writing skills and the perceived dependence of the application hereon.

The transition from “Production House”, where the Performing Arts Councils were predominantly responsible for producing productions, to “Playhouse”, where the role of PACOFS changed to that of “facilitator” of drama work rather than “producer” is described. The nature of transformed facilities now available to artists is described and where relevant, compared to the function of structures before restructuring with the following findings:

- All PACOFS facilities formerly devoted to the staging of productions including theatres, technical services, costumes, décor and service departments have been transformed into multi-functional conference, banquet and exhibition facilities.
- From impressions described, the specialist production facilities for the purpose of Performing Arts seem largely negated in favour of events and events management for a more business and corporate market than any artistic endeavour.

As regards artist perceptions of the restructuring of PACOFS, research findings from a focused group interview with student drama practitioners entering the profession can be summarized as:

- Final year drama students do not view the Performing Arts Council as playing a role in their planned careers.
- Festivals are seen as a more viable platform for presenting work than Performing Arts Councils.
- Young professional actors see themselves very much as “out on their own”, having to produce own work, find own funding and fend for themselves in the industry.
- Perceptions about the proficiency of PACOFS and its role in Free State Drama are generally negative.
- The lack of basic trust in the ability of PACOFS to play a meaningful role in work creation and support renders it an unviable platform for the presentation of their work.

Perceptions gathered from professional artists who were previously involved in PACOFS Drama both as Free State resident artists and as non-resident free-lance artists by way of questionnaire analysis rendered the following findings for non- resident artists:

- Combined results from the data point to the fact that most artists non- resident in the Free State require other sources of income to make ends meet and that drama and theatre work is not able to sustain them financially.
- Artists who previously worked in the Free State currently source work through a variety of means, but whether or not this work is sourced through agents, is self-generated or forthcoming from industry contacts, most of this work is sourced outside of the Free State.
- Combined data suggests that National Arts Council funding represents the smallest portion of sourced funding for Non- resident artists.
- Non-resident respondents derive most of their work from private theatre companies, but these are outside of the Free State Province.
- Non-resident respondents did no PACOFS associated work since their association with the PACOFS Drama Company ie. They never worked for PACOFS again.
- Most respondents did not view PACOFS as having a meaningful role to play in Free State Drama from the point of view of a Playhouse versus a production house.

- Most respondents view PACOFS as a facilitator, supplier of technical assistance and a provider of equipment.
- Most respondents feel they would like to see a complete change in Arts Policy and that most feel structures and Arts Policies are insufficient to contribute effectively to how drama is practiced in the province.

For artists resident in the Free State the following summarized findings apply:

- More resident artists require other jobs to make ends meet than those who manage to live from Theatre work only.
- Most work by resident artists is sourced through industry grapevine and contacts, followed by work which is self generated with very little Free State work generated by actor's agents.
- Most projects are self-funded followed by National Arts Council (NAC) funding.
- Resident artists managed to secure more work through PACOFS before transformation than is available to them now.
- Resident artists regard structures for funding, producing and staging drama work in the Free State as mostly insufficient and feel that these issues need to be redressed.
- Most resident artists source their work from educational projects (including workshops and teaching), followed by work sourced through private theatre companies, then radio and television work and then corporate and industrial theatre projects.
- Very little work is commissioned directly by PACOFS, with most projects assisted by PACOFS and followed lastly by work facilitated by PACOFS.
- PACOFS was used to assist with rehearsal space, technical help etc. but received no financial assistance.
- Secondly theatres were hired through PACOFS, followed by projects and productions worked on with private companies and staged in PACOFS theatres.
- Most Free State resident artists do not think PACOFS has a meaningful role to play in Free State Drama than those who do.
- As regards what most think the value PACOFS can add to work undertaken by Free State artists, most feel that facilitation is preferable above production because of PACOFS expertise on these levels.

- Most resident artists would like to see a complete change in arts policy.

Since one of the largest Nationally recognized Arts Festivals, The Volksblad Kunstefees has become such a viable platform for the presentation of Drama work, not only locally, but also of National interest, the study examines the nature and extent of this work with the following findings:

- The festival drama production language split analysis provides for a 95% Afrikaans production figure.
- The majority of festival productions are professional, followed by semi-professional and a small community theatre representation.
- Most plays are based on original Afrikaans scripts, followed by translations into Afrikaans, then adaptations from other literary sources into Afrikaans and a small percentage of English plays.
- Major festival sponsors include Media 24, private sponsors and the National Lottery, but sponsorship is forthcoming from a number of sources.

Perceptions regarding whether or not restructuring of PACOFS has had a beneficial effect on local artists is possibly the most important finding of this study, since the restructuring was intended to benefit local artists. A study of perceptions on the part of local artists rendered the following findings:

- Regarding whether or not more work was available to these artists within the former PACOFS structure, both artists are unanimous: they definitely worked more within the old structure.
- Both however mention that besides the number of opportunities available to them through the then PACOFS Drama Department, that both felt the department provided them with a base, a home and an advisory body for work both within and outside of the department and that this was no longer the case. This despite the fact that the present PACOFS had created experimental theatre workspaces for avant-garde work.
- The fact that they are not able to access these facilities effectively is ascribed to a breakdown in communication between themselves and the PACOFS management responsible for approving access to these structures.
- As regards NAC funding, both artists have submitted applications to the NAC and have had successful funding applications, but it seems successive applications were hampered by the fact

that insufficient reporting following the projects was submitted to the NAC.

- Both artists feel that actors are not equipped to constantly source funding or administrate it and that the task of initiating projects together with the demands of funding structures is a bewildering task for one artist.
- As regards companies, they are involved with community arts development projects for which private and government funding is available, but that the securing of such funding is also hampered by red tape.
- Both artists feel that the then PACOFS Drama department was closer to them than what the NAC is today.

The larger and better structured Drama Companies which came into existence in Bloemfontein following the closure of the PACOFS Drama Department provided the research with data pertaining to the nature and extent of Professional Drama work undertaken since redression of the PACs.

Comparison of a production year by the Companies PACOFS Drama, Free State Ensemble and FACTS, rendered the following findings:

Similarities exist for :

- Most work undertaken in Afrikaans
- Similar number of artists employed as required by the productions

Differences exist for:

- Budgets and production cost which cannot be compared accurately because of the different historical periods in which work was undertaken, as well as the scale on which productions are mounted.

Professional opinion regarding recommendations for a way forward for Drama Companies in the Free State rendered the following :

- Specialists in the field of Free State Drama are of the opinion that Nationally and Regionally recognized Professional Companies are still desired by drama practitioners.

- A need exists for professional artists to be distinguished by virtue of the company for which they work.
- The need for a representative National Drama Organisation, with regional representation to feed into a Nationally recognized company which produces work of exceptional artistic quality, comparable to a National Sports team.
- The fact that companies continue to be formed points to a desire on the part of drama practitioners to belong to such bodies.

Recommendations for a way forward may be summarized as:

Professional artists and drama practitioners desire structures for funding and Arts policy which are in service of the company concept described in this thesis and would like to see redression of Arts policy to facilitate this desire.

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June 10 2001. Van Graan, M. *The Show must go on.*

Electronic Media

NATIONAL ARTS COUNCIL

National Arts Council Website.

www.nac.org.za/fundingMoreInfo.html

NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF ARTS AND CULTURE

National Department of Arts and Culture Website:

www.dac.gov.za

PACOFS

1996/1997.

Drama Department Backup files.

NON-RESIDENT ACTORS QUESTIONNAIRE :

APPENDIX : A

Mark with an X in the appropriate block provided :

1. Name : (leave blank if you would prefer to remain anonymous) _____

2.1 Age?

20-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65

2.2 Sex?

Male	Female

2.3 Qualifications?

Tertiary Drama Degree/Diploma	No formal training

2.4 Home Language?

English	Afrikaans	Sesotho	Zulu	Other

2.5 Which Language do you most often work in?

English	Afrikaans	Sesotho	Zulu	Other

2.6 Marital Status?

Married	Unmarried

2.7 Dependents / Children?

YES	NO

URECH, S

1996. *A Look at Company Life*. Playback Theatre.

VAN DER HOVEN, E.

1974. *Hoe het ons gevorder?* In : 50 Jaar op die planke :
Beroepstoneel in Suid Afrika.

Interviews

Bagarette, Nathan, Dr.: 13 September 2005

Cowan, Onida, Ms.: 12 July 2005

de Koker, Maria, Ms.: 3 september 2007

du Plessis, JP, Mr.: 5 september 2003

Kamper, Gerben, Mr.: 15 September 2008

Kamper, Mareijda, Ms.: 12 September 2008

Kruger, Mariaan, Ms.: 5 September 2003

Luwes, Nico, Prof.: 9 February 2009

Mphatseng, Babes, Mr.: 3 september 2007

Rossouw, Suzanne, Ms.: 5 September 2003

van der Vyver, Ané, Ms.: 5 september 2003

van Helsdingen, James, Mr.: 5 July 2005

Venter, Pieter, Dr.: 17 September 2009

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1996/1997.

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2.17 No. of self produced projects yearly (please supply an actual figure).

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2.18 How is funding sourced for these projects?

National Arts Council	Self - funded	Other

2.19 From which source of work is most of your work forthcoming?

Private Theatre Companies (including Children's Theatre Companies)	Corporate / Industrial	Radio / Television / Voice work	Own Projects	Educational Projects (including workshops, teaching etc.)

2.20 What approximate percentage of the work that you did in the last two years was connected in any way with a Performing Arts Council in any of the Provinces you worked? (ie. Was any production staged in a theatre run by a PAC, or were you commissioned by any PAC, or was a production staged in a PAC during a tour in another province – any connection with a PAC or former PAC whatsoever.)

0%	10%	20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-90%	100%

2.21 If any work that you did in the last 2 years was in any way connected with a Performing Arts Council, what was the nature of this connection?

Hired a theatre for a production	Was assisted by the PAC its rehearsal space, technical help etc, but received no funding.	A production was commissioned/ bought and hosted by a PAC.	I received NAC funding for a project and approached the PAC for assistance / to stage the production / hire a theatre.	Performances of productions I worked on with private theatre companies were staged in theatres run by a PAC.

2.22 Did you do any work for PACOFS before the Drama Department at PACOFS was closed in 1996?

YES	NO

2.23 What percentage of the work that you did annually did this work for PACOFS represent?

0%	10%	20%	20-40%	40-60%	60-80%	80-90%	100%

2.24 Have you done any work connected with PACOFS in any way since the Drama Department was closed in 1996?

YES	NO

2.25 If any work that you did in the last 2 years was in any way connected with PACOFS, what was the nature of this connection?

Hired a theatre for a production	Was assisted by PACOFS its rehearsal space, technical help etc, but received no funding.	A production was commissioned/ bought and hosted by a PACOFS.	I received NAC funding for a project and approached PACOFS for assistance / to stage the production / hire a theatre.	Performances of productions I worked on with private theatre companies were staged in theatres run by PACOFS.

2.26 Has any of the work you have done in the past 2 years brought you to the Free State?

YES	NO

2.27 Was this work that originated in the Free State or was it a performance of a production that originated in another province and was brought to the Free State as part of a touring programme?

Originated in FS	Performed in FS originated in another province

2.28 Do you think that PACOFS is able to play a meaningful role in Free State Drama?

YES	NO

2.29 Have you ever applied to the NAC for project funding?

YES	NO

2.30 Was this application successful?

YES	NO

2.31 How many successful applications have you had ?

2.32 Have you ever been involved in or employed by a project that was funded by the NAC?

YES	NO

**2.33 What percentage of the projects that you are involved in are NAC funded?
(Please supply a percentage)**

2.34 Do you think that the NAC and the structures provided for artists to source funding is viable?

YES	NO

2.35 Would it be fair to say that prior to the restructuring of the Performing Arts Councils in South Africa, that most of your theatre work was connected with a PAC?

YES	NO

2.36 Would it be fair to say that most of the work that you currently undertake has nothing to do with the NAC or any of the PACS?

YES	NO

2.37 Given that the Free State Province has few attractions outside of theatre to offer actors by way of work , would it be fair to say that in your opinion the structures for funding, producing and staging drama work in the Free State are currently limiting the amount of work that can be done in the Free State, and that this needs to be re-addressed ?

YES	NO

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

RESIDENT ACTORS QUESTIONNAIRE :

APPENDIX: B

Mark with an X in the appropriate block provided :

1. Name : (leave blank if you would prefer to remain anonymous) _____

2.1 Age?

20-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65

2.2 Sex?

Male	Female

2.3 Qualifications?

Tertiary Drama Degree/Diploma	No formal training

2.4 Home Language?

English	Afrikaans	Sesotho	Zulu	Other

2.5 Which Language do you most often work in?

English	Afrikaans	Sesotho	Zulu	Other

2.6 Marital Status?

Married	Unmarried

2.7 Dependents / Children?

YES	NO

2.21 If any work that you did in the last 2 years was in any way connected with a Performing Arts Council, what was the nature of this connection?

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YES	NO

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.