

## ARTICLE

# Organizing artistic activities in a recurrent manner: (on the nature of) entrepreneurship in the performing arts

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A majority of performing arts organizations active in classical music, theatre, and contemporary dance rely on funding from “third parties” in order to organize productions in a recurrent manner. We adopt an entrepreneurial perspective to inform the debate on the economic *sustainability* of performing arts organizations: Is it a “deficit” in entrepreneurial orientation that condemns these organizations to financial dependence? Relying on a comparative case study design ( $n = 12$ ), we distill a process model of performing arts entrepreneurship (PAE), which we compare with insights on innovative entrepreneurship. Our findings reveal that it is neither a lack of entrepreneurial dynamics nor the presence of opposing logics that creates dependence on multiple revenue streams. The introduction of a second revenue stream follows from adhering to artistic distinctiveness. Implications for practice and theory are elaborated.

*The survival of the great majority of [performing arts] organizations requires a constant flow of contributions. We can then easily understand why the arts find themselves in their present unhappy financial circumstances. (Baumol & Bowen, 1965: 499)*

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship has been described as the process through which future goods and services are conceived, developed, and brought to the market (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Sarasvathy, 2001; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). Entrepreneurs are seen as agents of innovation who creatively combine available resources to generate value for customers and, in doing so, may create entirely new markets (Schumpeter, 1934). While most of the literature on entrepreneurship focuses on market-oriented ventures, scholars have begun to analyze value-creation activities that do not necessarily imply profit-oriented goals (e.g. Austin, Stevenson, & Wei-Skillern, 2006; Morris, Webb, & Franklin, 2011), resulting in contributions that focus on social entrepreneurship (Mair & Marti, 2006), institutional entrepreneurship (Garud, Hardy, & Maguire, 2007), public entrepreneurship (Klein, Mahoney, McGahan, & Pitelis, 2010), cultural entrepreneurship (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010; DiMaggio, 1982a, 1982b; Klamer, 2011; Scherdin & Zander, 2011; Swedberg, 2006) and performing arts entrepreneurship (Preece, 2011).

A number of these studies reveal that entrepreneurial agents in artistic settings engage in similar activities as their “regular”

counterparts, including combining resources creatively (Peterson & Berger, 1971), mobilizing a (dense) social network (Banks, Lovatt, O'Connor, & Raffo, 2000; Konrad, 2013), building legitimacy through framing processes (DiMaggio, 1982b), and introducing novelty (Lindqvist, 2011; Scherdin & Zander, 2011; Swedberg, 2006). At the same time, performing arts organizations<sup>1</sup> (Baumol & Bowen, 1965, 1966; DiMaggio, 1982a, 1982b; Throsby, 1994) commonly find themselves dependent on public support and private donations for their survival. Several authors (Baumol & Bowen, 1965, 1966; Hansmann, 1981; Throsby, 1994) relate the financial dependence of artistic ventures to the implied cost structure and/or patterns of consumer demand. In this contribution, we revisit this dependence by analyzing the inception and growth of entrepreneurial ventures in the performing arts (classical music, theatre, contemporary dance). To date, there has been relatively little empirical analysis of entrepreneurial *processes* in artistic settings in general, and in the performing arts in particular, focusing on the economic sustainability and performance of these ventures. If entrepreneurship positively influences firm performance and growth in “regular,” profit-oriented settings, the question of whether it is a “deficit” in terms of entrepreneurial orientation<sup>2</sup> (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996) that condemns these organizations to “unhappy financial circumstances” can be posited. On a more theoretical level, this examination allows us to delineate whether artistic entrepreneurship displays characteristics that distinguish it from “innovative” forms of entrepreneurship.

In this contribution, we address both questions by empirically investigating how artistic initiatives in the performing arts arrive at a

state of recurrent production. By means of multiple, longitudinal case studies ( $n = 12$ ), we examine the journey of performing arts entrepreneurs from inception to a more mature, stable phase. In the next section, we discuss previous findings pertaining to cultural entrepreneurship. Next, we explain the empirical research design and report on the observed patterns. This results in a stylized process model of performing arts entrepreneurship, which allows us to discuss the nature of artistic entrepreneurship and to advance propositions on the similarities and differences with other forms of innovative entrepreneurship. We conclude by discussing the limitations of our study as well as avenues for future research.

## 2 | PERFORMING ARTS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP: WHAT DO WE KNOW?

When engaging in artistic endeavors, monetary concerns are often considered of secondary importance. As the concept of “l'art pour l'art” conveys, the production of art has been portrayed as driven by “higher” objectives. Making profit is not the prime *raison d'être* for the vast majority of artists or artistic projects: the production of art focuses on the creation of intangible values (beauty, meaning, emotion) while less attention is paid to monetary return, which is a more central concern of profit-oriented ventures (Baumol & Bowen, 1965, 1966; Klamer, 2002; Swedberg, 2006). Such considerations, however, do not preclude artists from addressing the question of how to organize the production of art from an economic perspective (i.e., in a way that is financially viable). Within the contours of this study, two strands of literature seem particularly relevant; the first, identifying tensions stemming from the presence of different—sometimes opposing—“institutional logics,” and the second, exploring the (dis-)similarities between artists and entrepreneurs.

### 2.1 | Multiple logics

In trying to couple artistic ambitions with financial viability, artist-entrepreneurs can be confronted with ambiguities resulting from potentially opposing logics (Lampel, Lant, & Shamsie, 2000). Neo-institutional scholars refer to the concept of logic as a “broader set of cultural beliefs and rules that structure cognition and guide decision making in a field. At the organization level, logics can focus the attention of key decision makers on a delimited set of issues and solutions leading to logic-consistent decisions” (Lounsbury, 2007, p. 289). Therefore, the coexistence of multiple logics introduces complexity at the organization level, increasingly to the extent that these logics involve conflicting prescriptions on legitimate actions and outcomes (Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011). A number of authors highlight tensions between artistic and market logics in established performing arts organizations (Amans, Mazars-Chapelon, & Villesèque-Dubus, 2015; Christiansen & Skærbæk, 1997; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007; Glynn, 2000; Glynn & Lounsbury, 2005; Shymko & Roulet, 2017). Their studies show that conflicts, and the way in which they are resolved, affect organizational dynamics. Glynn (2000), for instance, examines how competing claims advanced by different professional groups (i.e., musicians and

administrators) affected core organizational capabilities and resources at the Atlanta Symphony Orchestra. In their analysis of German theaters, Eikhof and Haunschild (2007) suggest that the presence of idiosyncratic (i.e., highly personalized) human resource practices result from the need to address artistic and commercial pressures simultaneously. Similarly, Amans et al. (2015) explain the heterogeneity in budget practices in performing arts organizations as a result of the interaction between multiple logics, mediated by situational factors (such as ownership, governance, and organizational identity). Glynn and Lounsbury's (2005) and Shymko and Roulet's (2017) analyses show that the influence of competing logics is not confined to the internal dynamics of these organizations; the balance between artistic and market logics also influences external evaluations by decisive stakeholders (i.e., peers and critics). In this respect, studies from cultural sociology<sup>3</sup> and the “production of culture” perspective (Becker, 1982; Griswold, 1987; Hirsch, 1972; Peterson, 1976; for an overview, see Peterson & Anand, 2004) highlight “how the symbolic elements of culture are shaped by the systems within which they are created, distributed, evaluated, taught, and preserved” (Peterson & Anand, 2004, p. 311).

While these studies stress the presence and implications of multiple logics on established performing arts organizations, less attention has been paid to the role these tensions might play when starting a new artistic venture and their implications for (the nature of) entrepreneurship in artistic settings. Do “multiple logics” result in an entrepreneurial deficit and/or do they alter the nature of artistic entrepreneurship in a substantial manner?

### 2.2 | Artists as entrepreneurs?

In the field of entrepreneurship, several authors have examined some of the constituents of the entrepreneurial process in artistic settings, paying special attention to networking activity and novelty creation. Konrad (2013) finds that engaging in social networks positively influences the establishment of cultural venues and that this effect is especially relevant in contexts where governmental support for cultural activities is limited. These findings are consistent with those reported by Banks et al. (2000) and Wilson and Stokes (2005), who suggest the importance of network ties in building legitimacy and, hence, attracting financial resources in the music industry. Other scholars, inspired by Schumpeter, point to similarities between artists and “heroic entrepreneurs” (Klamer, 2011; Lindqvist, 2011; Scherdin & Zander, 2011; Swedberg, 2006; Van Looy, Robberechts, & Visscher, 2016): both artists and entrepreneurs introduce novelty and create markets. These authors reflect on the relationship between insights developed in the entrepreneurship literature and their applicability to the artistic process. They conclude that artists and entrepreneurs have many characteristics in common and situate the main difference between artistic entrepreneurship and its economic counterpart in their respective domains of action (the art world for the former and the market for the latter).

Combined, these studies indicate that some ingredients in entrepreneurial processes (e.g., networking, legitimation strategies, inner drive/vision, motivation, novelty creation, proactiveness) are equally observable in both artistic and business settings and, hence, suggest that adopting an entrepreneurial perspective has relevance

in informing the debate on the economical *sustainability* of performing arts organizations. A longitudinal, process-oriented approach (Moroz & Hindle, 2012; Rindova, Barry, & Ketchen, 2009; Steyaert, 2007), in which the entrepreneurial process acts as the core unit of analysis, seems to offer the best framework for addressing the underlying research questions while accommodating the different constituencies in entrepreneurial processes, including their institutional context. Adopting such a perspective in the empirical analysis results in a stylized process model, reflecting the different constituencies of entrepreneurial trajectories in the performing arts under study. This model will be instrumental in examining whether it is a “deficit” of entrepreneurial orientation that condemns these organizations to “unhappy financial circumstances.” On a more theoretical level, such an analysis allows us to assess whether artistic entrepreneurship is substantially different from its regular (innovative) counterparts.

### 3 | METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

#### 3.1 | Research design and empirical setting

In order to develop a more profound insight into the constituent elements that enable the inception and growth of performing arts ventures—including the nature and role of entrepreneurial activities within such endeavors—12 organizations active in the Belgian region of Flanders and the Netherlands have been analyzed retrospectively, by means of a longitudinal case study protocol. Given the nature of our research question(s), we opted for multiple cases rather than a single case study design because the implied variety allows us to (dis-)confirm emergent patterns and/or to identify relevant contingencies (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Yin, 2011).

We selected artistic organizations that have obtained “professional” status, i.e. organizations that have been able to achieve a scale whereby production costs are met from receipts and the artists involved are properly remunerated. Within the chosen genres (classical music, theatre, contemporary dance), all artistic ventures that achieve this professional status rely—to a varying degree—on the support of a third party, notably local or regional government and cultural funding agencies.<sup>4</sup> Additional case selection criteria<sup>5</sup> were identified in order to ensure variety in terms of growth (modest/considerable) and time period of inception (late 1980s/early 1990s versus post-2000) (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Seawright & Gerring, 2008). This induced variety is seen as instrumental in verifying whether patterns are consistent and/or driven by (idiosyncratic) contingencies (Eisenhardt, 1991). Table 1 provides an overview of the selected cases.

#### 3.2 | Data sources, collection, and narratives

For each case study, the following central concepts have guided data collection efforts (Pentland, 1999; Pettigrew, 1990): (1) evolution of growth, stagnation, or decline, measured by the number of performances and turnover; (2) antecedents of growth, stagnation, or decline, either stemming from “internal” entrepreneurial initiative or inspired by external opportunities. For the former, annual accounts

and archival data obtained from the artistic organizations and from the Flemish administration (“Kunsten en Erfgoed”) have been analyzed. For the latter, data have been derived from interviews with key informants (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007)—including the artist(s)/founder(s) and/or the managerial staff of the organizations—and have been complemented with secondary data, including press coverage, reports, and existing publications (Gibbert, Ruigrok, & Wicki, 2008; Ivankova, Creswell, & Stick, 2006; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998).

A pilot case study was conducted beforehand to test the interview and case study protocol. This permitted the researchers to address potential issues and flaws in the research design in an opportune manner. Based on the tested research protocol, the data gathering process became structured in different phases. First, quantitative data (i.e., financial data and data concerning the number of performances) were collected, analyzed, and plotted in order to have an overview of the evolution of the organization. Second, interviews with key informants (artists and management) active in the organization since its inception were carried out to make sense of the patterns that emerged from the figures collected in the first phase. Each semi-structured interview lasted approximately 60–90 minutes and followed a strict protocol. Specifically, interviewees were asked to provide a chronological history of their organization, with special attention to drivers of growth or decline and the enactment of different revenue streams. They were then asked to relate their narratives to the facts and figures previously collected by the researchers in order to explain variations in the annual number of performances and turnover.<sup>6</sup> The focus on facts aimed to minimize informant bias: the triangulation of qualitative and quantitative data proved to be highly instrumental in arriving at validated patterns.

#### 3.3 | Data analysis

For each case, a descriptive report was built up, outlining the development of the organization from its inception until 2011. Data triangulation and extensive discussions among the members of the research team during the data collection phase allowed us to identify inconsistencies, which were then verified through follow-up emails and phone contacts with our informants. Note that, for each case, a report was compiled and sent back to the interviewees for validation purposes. The resulting narratives are especially suited to the development of process theories as they allow us to recognize (sequential) patterns in the data as well as the antecedents of these patterns (Pentland, 1999). The validated report, together with field notes, interview recordings, and relevant secondary sources (i.e., press articles, published interviews, critic reviews, company websites, other reports and publications) served as an input for analytical maps that identify the sequence of events within each narrative.<sup>7</sup> Combined, these maps and reports served as the input for the cross-case analysis, which aimed to define whether consistent patterns in the development process of performing arts ventures can be observed. The resulting process model identifies the ingredients visible in each case as well as the dominant sequence of events. Subsequently, this process model was compared with insights from the literature on other forms of entrepreneurship, to assess similarities and differences.

TABLE 1 Description of case organizations

Organization	Sub-sector and artistic focus	Artistic leading figure(s)	Average annual no. of performances (since structural support)	Average turnover (since structural support)	Period of study	Interviews – Informants	Secondary data sources
Collegium Vocale Gent	Classical music (Baroque Music – J.S. Bach's vocal oeuvre)	Philippe Herreweghe	80	€2,052,264	1970–2011	Board chairman and previous choir member General Manager Administrative coordinator	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 1 video documentary, 4 press interviews, 1 biographical note
Beethoven Academie	Classical music (Beethoven)	Jan Caeyers Hervé Niquet (2004–2006)	47	€1,690,837	1993–2006	Artistic Director	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 2 press interviews, 1 publication, 2 biographical notes
Brussels Jazz Orchestra	Jazz music (Big Band)	Frank Vaganée	29	€421,848	1993–2011	General Manager	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 2 press interviews
Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw	Jazz music (Big Band)	Henk Meutgeert,	32	€440,000	1996–2009	Artistic and Business Director	Annual accounts, organization website, 1 press interview, 1 biographical note
Ultima Vez	Dance (Contemporary dance)	Wim Vandekeybus	78	€1,592,923	1987–2011	General Manager	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 4 press interviews, 1 publication
Hyena	Dance (Contemporary dance)	Mark Vanrunxt	27	n.a.	1981–2000	Artistic Director	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 1 publication, 2 press interviews, 1 biographical note
Kunst/Werk		Mark Vanrunxt, Alexander Baervoets, Salva Sanchez	58	€297,889	2001–2011	Artistic Director	2 reviews
Peeping Tom	Dance (Contemporary dance)	Gabriella Carrizo and Frank Chartier	45	€823,163	2001–2011	Artistic Coordinator General Manager	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 2 press interviews, 1 review
ZOO	Dance (Contemporary dance)	Thomas Hauert	42	€518,643	1997–2012	General Manager	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 3 press interviews, 2 reviews
TG Stan	Theatre (Repertory theater)	Jolente De Keersmaeker,	127	€846,522	1989–2011	Actor	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports,

(Continues)

TABLE 1 (Continued)

Organization	Sub-sector and artistic focus	Artistic leading figure(s)	Average annual no. of performances (since structural support)	Average turnover (since structural support)	Period of study	Interviews – Informants	Secondary data sources
De Roovers	Theatre (Repertory and text theater)	Sara De Roo, Damiaan De Schrijver, Frank Verduyssen, Robby Cleiren, Sara De Bosschere, Luc Nuyens, Sofie Sente and Stef Stessel	73	€590,787	1994–2011	General Manager Actor and member of the artistic core Actor and member of the artistic core	organization website, 4 press interviews, 2 reviews Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 2 press interviews
Abattoir Fermé	Theatre (Repertory, text and silent theater)	Stef Lernous	87	€460,884	1999–2011	General Manager	Annual accounts, Flemish administration reports, organization website, 4 press interviews, 3 reviews
Wunderbaum	Theatre (Text theater)	Walter Bart, Matijs Jansen, Marleen Scholten, Maartje Remmers, Wine Dierickx and Maarten van Otterdijk	97	€902,011	2001–2011	General Manager	Annual accounts, organization website, 1 press interview, 1 review

## 4 | RESULTS: A PROCESS MODEL OF PAE

The flow of activities emerging from our case studies is summarized in a process model of PAE (shown in Figure 1), depicting different stages –each consisting of key “ingredients”–through which a new artistic venture evolves (from inception to recurrence).

Two subsequent stages are visible: (1) from inception to first performance and (2) from this first production(s) to recurrent performance. The transition from Stage 1 to Stage 2 depends on the evaluation of the first performance(s) by both audiences and experts (peers/critics). Each stage involves a set of ingredients and activities that are instrumental in arriving at the next stage. When moving from inception to recurrence, recursive paths have been observed, signaling the inherent circular nature of the underlying processes. We also observed variety in the length of the different phases. In the sections that follow, we discuss the observed patterns and the distilled process model, and illustrate their initial progression from the case study analysis.

### 4.1 | The inception of a performing arts venture: Combining artistic vision and entrepreneurial orientation

The inception of an artistic endeavor builds on the simultaneous presence of a distinctive artistic vision and entrepreneurial orientation, embodied either in a single artist or a small collective. While our data indicate variation in the actual circumstances that mark the starting point of the entrepreneurial path, for all artists examined, an urgency to create and bring their own artistic vision (contribution) to the stage

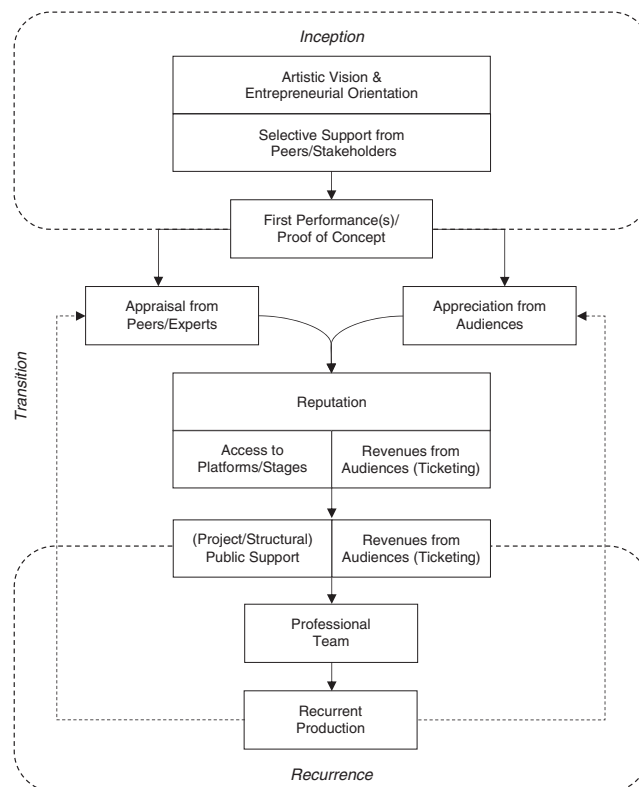


FIGURE 1 A process model of performing arts entrepreneurship

proved to be decisive in launching their own artistic projects. More quotes illustrating the presence of artistic vision/entrepreneurial orientation can be found in the Appendix. This “inner” drive prevails over market considerations: none of the interviewees refer to market needs, “targeting” market segments/customers or pleasing/accommodating the preference of customers (segments) as important or decisive when embarking on the artistic journey.

*From day one, there was the urge to dance in “my own way”: non-narrative, non-psychological, non-figurative. Removing all narratives is a process that continues until today.<sup>8</sup>*

*None of us has ever chosen the easiest route, even though we had the chance. We have never made artistic concessions as a panic reaction: shit, we might not have any more work soon. [...] I realize there are more interesting media than theatre when it comes to sharing something with the world, but I believe it is important to be able to look your public in the eye. You can't do that when there are a thousand people watching. [...] The day I no longer believe my opinion can have some effect on the world, however small, I won't go on stage any more. I'll stop acting.<sup>9</sup>*

*With Abattoir Fermé, we like to think of ourselves as creators who pursue high quality work and who constantly challenge themselves. Quality is an important notion: we are not easily satisfied. We are constantly looking for an adventure, and so preferably, our work shouldn't be too predictable. [...] every decision we make as a company has a firm artistic basis. Business is always secondary. That's pretty rare and “independent” these days. You make some compromises of course, because you want the audience to understand and engage in the performance to some degree. But you stay true to your artistic framework.<sup>10</sup>*

At the same time, the case data reveal that artists do not operate in isolation. The quest for a stage on which to launch their first creation(s) benefits from the support of stakeholders (i.e., mentors, like-minded artists/peers) located in the artistic landscape. This involvement complements the artistic vision as well as the “venturing” process. Participating in an artistic community enables artists to refine their distinctive vision through interaction/dialogue with existing practices. In addition, stakeholders who recognize artists' potential provide support through networking/gate-keeping activities and mobilize resources that are instrumental in staging artists' early productions.

These dynamics are visible in all cases examined. Philippe Herreweghe's Collegium Vocale, for instance, can be situated in the so-called “Early Music” movement, which strives for historically informed performance practices. The Belgian conductor was inspired by a number of musicians actively involved in exploring the potential of authentic performance practices for baroque music. These people not only informed Herreweghe's artistic trajectory but they also assisted in providing performance opportunities.

*I have been very lucky that around my twentieth birthday I had the opportunity to work with Nikolaus Harnoncourt and Gustav Leonhardt [key figures of the “Early Music” movement]. Leonhardt was taken with the sound of our amateur choir, Collegium Vocale, and invited us to record Bach together with him. I was allowed to conduct a little, although I actually was a student of medicine. Leonhardt was the real artistic leader, from behind his little organ. We were convinced that the way in which we performed Bach was the only correct one.<sup>11</sup>*

A number of embryonic artistic projects took root during the years of education, especially in the case of artistic collectives. The founders of TG Stan, De Roovers, and Wunderbaum met during their student years at the conservatory, where they also established relationships that proved decisive for the inception of the nascent organizations. For instance, the encounter with two important theater directors<sup>12</sup> who were teachers at the Antwerp Conservatory is recalled by members of TG Stan as a crucial stepping stone in founding the collective. Similarly, meeting Johan Simons, one of the leading figures of the Dutch theater scene, at the Maastricht conservatory gave critical impulse to the early steps of Wunderbaum. His involvement proved to be decisive in introducing the young collective to new platforms, such as the “Productiehuis” in Rotterdam.

*They [Wunderbaum] told Johan [Simons]: “we want to produce a piece each year”. Johan liked the idea and gave them some money to get started for half a year. Annemie [Vanackere] and I [Jan Zoat—at the time, artistic leader and director of the “Productiehuis” Rotterdam respectively] were intrigued, I of course by the name of the group as well, and we went to look at what they were doing and who they were. We saw a performance and thought that we at least had to show this in Rotterdam, because the “Productiehuis” was also there to provide a podium for a new generation of theater makers.<sup>13</sup>*

In other cases, the decision to start an independent project comes only later: prior experiences and collaborations are instrumental in developing a personal artistic trajectory as well as gaining support from stakeholders in the artistic landscape. The experience of the founders of Peeping Tom, ZOO, Brussels Jazz Orchestra, and the Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw is illustrative in this respect: these artists were active in several established companies/ensembles before founding their own project.

*“It was a dream to be coming out of school to dance with a choreographer [Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker] I'd so admired [...] It opened up so many opportunities for me and introduced me to Brussels.” Brussels also brought Hauert into contact with Venezuelan choreographer David Zambrano, whom he credits with being his biggest artistic influence. “His approach is that the body needs time to learn how to improvise. We spent eight months learning ‘Ballroom.’”<sup>14</sup>*

## 4.2 | Conquering the stage: Appreciation and legitimation as pathways to recurrence

The initial performances represent an important landmark as the implied visibility triggers a legitimation process in which both audiences and “opinion makers” are involved. Their appreciation is crucial in terms of enabling (or constraining) consecutive steps (toward the next production). To the extent that the initial production is well received, additional performance opportunities are more likely to arise. In this process, not only is the voice of the audience influential but the opinions of experts (respected colleagues and also journalists, critics, and programmers) seem at least equally important.

As Wim Vandekeybus recalls, *Ultima Vez's* debut in New York was an immediate success and paved the way for subsequent performances. The unanimous enthusiasm of dance critics and programmers, who recognized the innovative potential of Vandekeybus's first work, resulted in additional performance opportunities both abroad and in his home country.

*It was the world premiere of “What the Body Does Not Remember” in Harlem. The performance had the effect of a bomb. Someone from the famous New York's arts center “The Kitchen” came to see the show and found it fantastic. [...] After the first performance at “The Kitchen”, we heard someone shouting. It was Iggy Pop, who was part of the board of “The Kitchen”, and found the show brilliant. He came to tell us. Shortly afterwards, we won the Bessie Award. Resulting in a new invitation to come to New York.<sup>15</sup>*

In a similar vein, the first performances of the then-called “New Concert Big Band” on Sunday nights at the Bimhuis (Jazz club) in Amsterdam attracted the attention of influential stakeholders who granted access to prestigious stages.

*The success of these Sunday night concerts did not pass unnoticed by all sorts of people from the musical world. Martijn Sanders, then the director of the Amsterdam Concertgebouw, proposed for instance to change the name into “Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw” and placed his stage at the disposal of the orchestra for several concerts every year.<sup>16</sup>*

The importance of such dynamics becomes especially clear when appreciation is not, or no longer, present. The experience of Marc Vanrunxt is a case in point. Despite the initial, enthusiastic reactions to Vanrunxt's early works, later productions received negative reviews and assessments. In consequence, Vanrunxt encountered difficulties in gleaning opportunities to perform his work. The difficulties experienced by the circuits backing Vanrunxt (i.e., *De Beweeging* festival in Antwerp) also contributed to this “downward” trend—a descending spiral negatively impacting the artist's reputation, performance opportunities and, hence, visibility.

*I think I sometimes made the wrong production. That is, the wrong production at the wrong moment. A number of people didn't like it. So a number of key stakeholders in the dance scene (in Flanders) not only embraced me,*

*they also discarded me/my work later on. [...] Ballet in White was totally not understood in 1988. It wasn't taken seriously by the people who took important decisions at that particular time.<sup>17</sup>*

## 4.3 | Organizing for recurrence: Acquiring additional funds to professionalize the team

Early performances precede organizational formation and, in most cases, take place without a professional organization in place and often with little or no remuneration. During initial phases, members of the “founding team” or the artist(s) themselves take responsibility for core organizational activities on a part-time/voluntary basis. However, the limits of this operational form soon become apparent. Whilst the artistic creative process leading to a first proof of concept takes place with limited resources because they are fueled by entrepreneurial drive, creating and organizing consecutive productions and resulting performances benefit from a stable professional organization. Increasing the number of performances requires greater commitment to effectively manage the increased scale of artistic activity. Additional competencies and discrete complementary roles become critical in moving forward.

*[Coming up continuously with new creations] requires a very good organization. That is why we currently have two full-time people in the administration to organize the concerts, the rehearsals, the planning, the trips and the bookings. The dates are often booked well in advance. At least six months.<sup>18</sup>*

Turning to our case data, we observe that project grants, collaborations with and technical/managerial support from more established organizations often provide the initial resources to set up the first, provisional organizational structure. Building legitimacy—initiated by staging the very first creation—proves to be instrumental in this phase. Organizing the activity on a project basis allows the newly formed ventures to further develop and refine their artistic visions. New productions are also instrumental in consolidating a reputation among stakeholders and audiences. This intermediate step proves to be key in convincing decision makers (i.e., governmental agencies and public bodies) of the artistic value/relevance and, ultimately, of the merits of granting public support on a structural basis. The acquisition of structural external funding, in turn, enables the organization to complement the initial artistic and entrepreneurial endeavor with specialized roles geared toward the professional development of the initiative. Table 2 summarizes the chronology of milestone achievements in our case organizations.

In most cases, the moment when organizations are granted structural funds (roughly) coincides with the professionalization of the team:<sup>19</sup> the implied income enables organizations to hire managerial and operational staff. Evolving into a more elaborate organizational form then facilitates the creation of new productions: as organizational and commercial activities are taken over by dedicated staff, more resources become available for artistic creation as well. Building a repertoire, in turn, leads directly to increased visibility and reputation, thus nurturing a positive feedback loop from recurrent production to legitimation.

TABLE 2 Milestone achievements

Organization	First performance	First award / Recognition	First project grants	Structural financial support	Professional management	Average dependence on structural subsidies (share) <sup>a</sup>
Collegium Vocale Gent	1970	1990 Founder – Music Personality of the Year - Belgium	1989	1993 <sup>b</sup>	1990	35%
Beethoven Academie	1993 (1985 – Nieuw Belgisch kamerorkest)	No	(1986 Nieuw Belgisch Kamerorkest)	1994 – 2006 (organization stops in 2006) <sup>c</sup>	1998	60%
Brussels Jazz Orchestra	1993	1996 Prix Nicolas d'Or	1997-1998	1999	2000	57%
Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw	1996 (New Concert Big Band)	1989 Founder – Peter Schilperoort Award – The Netherlands	1999	2001	2001-2009 (External managers) 2009 (independent organization)	31%
Ultima Vez	1987	1988 and 1989 Bessie Award – New York, USA	1989	1993	1994	49%
Hyena	1983	No	1987	No	No (2000 organizational re-orientation – Kunst/Werk)	n.a.
Kunst/Werk	2001	No		2001	2001	72%
Peeping Tom	1999	2005 Best Dance Show Prize – France	2000	2008	2008	33%
ZOO	1997	1998 Author Prize and Jan Fabre Prize – Rencontres chorégraphiques de Seine-Saint-Denis – France	1998	2001	2001	55%
TG Stan	1989	1999 First Prize at the Theaterfestival for the production 'My Dinner with Andre'	1990 – 1992	1993	1995	68%
De Roovers	1994	No	1995	2001	2006 (2000–2005 external management)	74%
Abattoir Fermé	1999	2008 Flemish Culture Prize	2003/2004	2006	2006	59%
Wunderbaum (2001–2005 JongHollandia)	2001	2007 Mary Dresselhuys award	2005	2009	2009	64%

<sup>a</sup>Average share of public support on turnover (since structural support).

<sup>b</sup>In 1993 Collegium Vocale Gent was nominated “Cultural Ambassador of Flanders”. The “Cultural Ambassadorship” is one of the first initiatives by the Flemish Government to provide artists with structural support.

<sup>c</sup>The artistic founder of Beethoven Academie previously founded the Nieuw Belgisch Kamerorkest (1985–1992). Due to financial difficulty, this organization “stops” in 1992 to “resurrect” in 1993 with the name of Beethoven Academie. In 2003 the artistic leader, Jan Caeyers, leaves the organization due to conflicts with the management and Herve Niquet is appointed as the new artistic director. The organization goes bankrupt in 2006. In 2010 Jan Caeyers founds a new organization, Le Concert Olympique. Due to the recent foundation, this organization is not included among the cases.

Table 2 shows varying degrees of dependence on public funding across cases. A number of contingencies are at play here. First, the choice of certain genres explains some of the observed differences.

Jazz orchestras, for instance, appeal to larger audiences than ensembles focusing on classical music. A second explanation obviously relates to the reception of novel productions, both by critics and the



audience: a well-received production in a given year might result in additional ticket revenues. Third, “external” factors result in variation, at least on a temporary basis. The celebration of the 250th anniversary of Bach's death in 2000 is a case in point: this anniversary resulted in a significant increase in the number of performance opportunities for Collegium Vocale in that same year. In a similar vein, although resulting in opposite outcomes, the Dutch government's decision to reduce the budget for the Arts and Culture in 2012—and the consequent loss of funding for a number of Dutch organizations—had a negative impact on the operations of Belgian organizations as well. The withdrawal of co-producers from the Netherlands and also the reduction in performance opportunities affected the turnover of theater companies in Flanders. Finally, “internal” factors and artistic choices may also account for differences in revenue streams. The efforts of organizations to internationalize their activities, to collaborate with renowned artists, or to stage productions addressing specific target groups may ensure larger markets and, thus, result in a greater proportion of self-generated revenue. Likewise, opting for novel, more experimental creations may require more development time and, hence, less income from ticketing over the period in question. Despite this variation, all cases under study display a similar pattern in terms of revenue streams and, hence, business models: arriving at a state of recurrence requires the income stemming directly from the audience (ticketing) to be complemented with revenues from a third party (in our cases, structural support from local and regional governments).

## 5 | DISCUSSION

The process model characterized above outlines the major constituents observed when artists, fueled by ambition and vision, initiate a new artistic venture that allows them to create artistic productions in a recurrent manner. This model is instrumental in making a comparison with existing models of entrepreneurship in order to detect whether “unhappy” financial conditions can be attributed to a lack of entrepreneurial behavior and to what extent PAE really differs from its innovative counterpart, as suggested by Preece (2011). Given the dominance of the “artistic push” and market creation dynamics, we compare our case findings with entrepreneurial processes unfolding in innovative settings. Our analysis of the cases demonstrates that a great deal of similarity exists between artistic and innovative entrepreneurial trajectories. At the same time, some notable differences—with non-trivial implications for the economic sustainability of artistic ventures—are brought to light.

### 5.1 | Performing arts and “innovative” entrepreneurship: Alike

When testing our process model against the insights obtained from the current entrepreneurship literature, a first observation relates to the starting point of the entrepreneurial trajectory. Both types of process rely on vision and drive as the foundational elements of the nascent organization's value proposition and the development of a first prototype. Studies demonstrate that, for entrepreneurs, pursuing their own vision—i.e., addressing societal needs and concerns in an idiosyncratic

or novel manner—is just as, if not more, important than the prospect of future financial gains in explaining the decision to launch their own project (Drucker, 1998; Hamilton, 2000; Shane, Locke, & Collins, 2003). As highlighted in previous work (Lindqvist, 2011; Scherdin & Zander, 2011; Swedberg, 2006), our case data confirm that artist-entrepreneurs are primarily driven by the desire to pursue their distinctive artistic vision and bring it to the stage. Similar to “heroic entrepreneurs” (Schumpeter, 1934), they do not start from a consideration of market needs; rather, in pursuing their own vision, they “create” markets. Hence, our observations clearly signal the prevalence of opportunity creation dynamics (Alvarez & Barney, 2007; Short, Ketchen, Shook, & Ireland, 2010; Zahra, 2008): the prevailing role of the “artistic push” suggests that performing arts ventures face challenges similar to the ones that innovative entrepreneurs encounter in pursuing innovation of a more radical nature.

If the entrepreneurial process originates from (at least in part) comparable motivation, most of the subsequent dynamics also seem similar. In both cases, the process through which initial ideas are brought to the market/stage appears highly embedded in either technological or artistic communities (Becker, 1982; Callon, Law, & Rip, 1986; Crane, 1989; Dosi, 1982). The establishment of both performing arts and (innovative) ventures benefits from being situated in communities<sup>20</sup> where niche dynamics can unfold (Geels, 2002; Rip, 2010). Moreover, these communities provide “roles,” which are highly instrumental, or even necessary, in arriving at a first performance/prototype (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Becker, 1982; Garud & Karnøe, 2001; Roberts & Fusfeld, 1982).

While conquering a stage with a first production requires limited resources (Preece, 2011; Scott, 2012), organizing for recurrent creations needs more than individual artists and what a limited circle of supporters can offer. In order to acquire additional resources, recognition both by the audience and by “gatekeepers” can directly influence future performance opportunities. Similarly, organizational ecology and institutional studies advance legitimacy as a key resource for the survival and growth of new ventures addressing the challenges related to the “liability of newness” (Freeman, Carroll, & Hannan, 1983; Stinchcombe, 1965). In artistic settings, legitimacy stems from the assessment and appraisal of the first proof of concept by “experts” and influential stakeholders, namely critics, peers, and curators. Such “validation” has been identified by the entrepreneurship literature as a crucial element in gaining access to other resources such as capital, technology, personnel, networks, and customers (Ashforth & Gibbs, 1990; Hannan & Freeman, 1984, 1989; Kirmani & Rao, 2000; Rao, 1994; Suchman, 1995; Wang, Song, & Zhao, 2014; Zimmerman & Zeitz, 2002; Zucker, 1989). Moreover, whilst the acquisition of legitimacy is important for every new venture, it is most salient for innovative entrepreneurs in emerging industries involving market creation dynamics (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994; Nelson & Winter, 1977; Rosenkopf & Tushman, 1998; Wang et al., 2014). In such settings, deploying both market and non-market<sup>21</sup> strategies is crucial to the organization's survival and performance: While early customers are important to communicate value and inspire others to adopt, the actual materialization of opportunities is also influenced by non-market forces, including government agencies, technical committees, interests groups, and activists (Baron, 1995).

Once legitimacy is acquired, it becomes more straightforward for nascent ventures to gain access to additional resources that are

instrumental in moving to sustained growth and recurrence. In both entrepreneurial and artistic settings, this transition presents the organization with new challenges pertaining to the professional development of the team/organization: Activities become more structured, specialized roles and complementary competencies become a necessity. As the venture grows, entrepreneurial roles are complemented with managerial and supportive ones (Greiner, 1972; Wasserman, 2008).

## 5.2 | Performing arts and “innovative” entrepreneurship: Different

Although comparable dynamics in both entrepreneurial processes are apparent, the question arises why the performing arts ventures under study still depend on third party support once they arrive at a “state of recurrence.” Does this signal the failure of a business, a lack of entrepreneurship, or are there other root causes explaining this dependence?

Notwithstanding considerable similarity, our case observations point to subtle yet important differences in terms of entrepreneurial processes revealed in the performing arts vis-à-vis other fields. While both benefit from a distinctive/idiosyncratic drive during initial phases, in the case of innovative ventures, once legitimacy is obtained, further growth of the firm ultimately rests on market acceptance (Garud & Karnøe, 2003; Nelson & Winter, 1977, 1982). Even when introducing disruptive innovations for which a market has to be created, refinement and, hence, alignment to market needs remains an inherent part of the entrepreneurial process (Baker & Nelson, 2005; Bhidé, 1999; Garud & Karnøe, 2003; Sarasvathy, 2001; von Hippel, 1986). In contrast, such periods of adaptation of the value proposition to accommodate customer needs have not been observed in our case studies. Whilst feedback and input from peers, stakeholders, and even members of the audience may well inspire the development and refinement of the artistic concept,<sup>22</sup> the artistic creation process is ultimately not geared to accommodating the audience’s taste (on a scale that would secure economic survival by means of ticketing alone) (Hirschman, 1983). Responding primarily to an “inner” artistic drive, the value proposition directly reflects the artistic vision of the founder(s) while audiences are left with the option to either join or abstain.<sup>23</sup> In addition, peer and expert recognition in artistic settings depends on adherence to field-level norms that favor artistic integrity and authenticity over economic considerations (such as maximizing audiences) (Bourdieu, 1993; Hirschman, 1983). Given the dominance of this artistic ethos among both artists and critics/peers, commercial considerations may even be detrimental in contexts where artistic reputation plays a pivotal role in legitimation (Beverland, 2005; Shymko & Roulet, 2017).

The priority attached to artistic “value,” in turn, has important implications for the size of the attainable market and, hence, the revenue potential and viability of market-oriented business models. Novel, experimental productions as well as confrontational, “difficult,” discomfiting or challenging works in most cases do not appeal to large audiences and, at best, imply long time frames to gain acceptance in the mainstream of cultural production (Baumol & Bowen, 1966; Hutter, 2015). So, while the ability to engage audiences and to mobilize them effectively remains an inherent part of the artistic creation process (Lindqvist, 2011), artistic considerations ultimately prevail over the quest for commercial success.<sup>24</sup> As a result of this “unwillingness”

to adapt the value proposition to accommodate the taste of larger audiences, our case organizations operate “structurally” in niche markets. With audiences too small for ticket revenues to cover all production costs—even when differential ticket prices are applied (Throsby, 1994)—the enactment of a second revenue stream, in addition to ticketing, becomes a necessity for these organizations to achieve recurrence.

The dynamics depicted above have important consequences for the entrepreneurial path of performing arts organizations. As artistic distinctiveness prevails over attracting larger audiences, “external” funding continues to play an important role for performing arts organizations even when entering a more mature stage: PAE implies a recurrent role for both “market” and “non-market” strategies. The approval of peers and experts remains crucial in judging the merits of artistic productions and, ultimately, in convincing decision makers (i.e., governmental agencies and public bodies) to grant additional public support. Contrary to what we observe in other industries where firms move along the opportunity control axis toward reliance on markets once institutional structures have emerged and consumer preferences stabilized (Aldrich & Fiol, 1994; Baron, 1995; Garud & Karnøe, 2003), the importance of non-market strategies does not diminish for performing arts organizations during later phases. The resulting “structural” presence of a second revenue stream and, hence, the continuing importance of a “dual” selection environment produces a “paradoxical” situation. On the one hand, the engagement of third parties guarantees artistic freedom by insulating the venture—at least partly—from “traditional” market selection dynamics; on the other hand, the implied financial dependence contributes to the economic vulnerability of these performing arts ventures.

## 6 | CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

In this contribution, we have sought to investigate whether the financial distress of performing arts organizations can be attributed to a “deficit” in terms of entrepreneurial orientation. We sketched and analyzed the processes through which artistic-entrepreneurs succeed in creating new ventures and bring them to a state of recurrence. We then compared our results with existing models of innovative entrepreneurship, i.e. entrepreneurs who likewise face the challenge of “creating” markets. This comparison enabled us to address the topic on a more theoretical level: Does entrepreneurship in the performing arts display certain characteristics that set it apart (or distinguish) it from innovative entrepreneurship?

Our analysis shows that entrepreneurial dynamics in the performing arts are to a large extent similar to those highlighted in the literature on innovative entrepreneurship. At the same time, PAE differs in one important respect. The original artistic drive, instrumental in the inception of a new artistic venture, remains the focus and the *raison d’être* of the venture, even if the size of the audience is limited. The (initial) artistic vision remains at the core of the venture’s value proposition from inception to recurrence, and it is not altered to attract larger audiences. Together, these observations suggest a clear conclusion to our initial question: It is not a deficiency in entrepreneurial

orientation that explains the structural financial dependence of performing arts organizations. Rather, adherence to the initial creative drive introduces a second revenue stream to close the gap between income and costs in order to arrive at recurrent production.

Whereas neo-institutional scholars highlight a dialectical, sometimes conflicting, relationship between artistic and market logics in established artistic organizations, our analysis points to the dominance of only one logic (i.e., the artistic logic) in (artistic) entrepreneurial settings. The dialectical opposition between two opposing logics—the arts and the market—seems to be resolved by prioritizing the former over the latter, which plays “only” an instrumental, ancillary role. The adherence to “one” logic (the artistic one) results in the enactment of a “dual” business model, consisting of two revenue streams (ticketing and third-party support). The necessity of the second revenue stream, in turn, explains the persistent importance of stakeholders in the artistic landscape (i.e., peers and critics) for the survival of these ventures and, hence, the non-diminishing role of non-market strategies throughout the lifecycle of the artistic venture. The structural presence of this second revenue stream also introduces vulnerability to performing arts organizations leading to a paradoxical existential condition: the quest for (artistic) autonomy leads to (financial) dependence.

These observations open interesting avenues for future research. First, consistent with the work of Baumol and Bowen (1966), our propositions on the nature of entrepreneurial processes in the performing arts confirm—albeit from a different perspective—the central role of “external” funders for the survival of these organizations. While (performing) arts organizations are confronted with rising pressures to increase their share of market-generated revenues by becoming “more entrepreneurial,” our findings suggest that financial dependence cannot be attributed to a lack of entrepreneurial orientation but stems from adhering to the artistic vision. Whether this is a sufficient argument for government support of the arts is a different issue (Besharov, 2005). At least, our findings inform this long-lasting debate and point to the need to pay greater attention to “spillovers” as a justification for the investment of public money. Historical analyses tracing (unexpected) developments of artistic innovations over time might offer an interesting perspective in this respect (on the evolution of innovations in the visual arts, see, e.g., Hutter, 2015).

Second, the intimate relationship between the artistic vision embodied by the founder(s) and the organization suggests limits to growth—and even continuity in the long run. The initial artistic drive—embodied by the (artistic) founder(s)—remains essential for the subsequent development of the organization as it constitutes the *raison d'être* and the main “assets” around which production activities revolve.<sup>25</sup> Therefore, the organization's continuation (and attainable scale) appears inextricably linked to the “capacity” of its artistic core. Future research on whether it is feasible to transcend such limitations offers a worthwhile line of pursuit. In performing arts organizations, for instance, other artists may become involved and take over the artistic legacy of the initiator. Further research is required to explore how these types of organization may evolve into established institutions and to what extent isomorphic processes come into play (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Garud et al., 2007; Scott, 1995). In this contribution, we deliberately chose organizations that, although reaching a status

that enables recurrent production, are still close to the entrepreneurial phase. Is institutionalization the moment when the artistic drive dries up and market logics take over? While this contribution extends our understanding of the relationship between artistic and market logics in entrepreneurial settings, considering how the presence of different logics evolve over time seems relevant and worth pursuing.

This current study has a number of limitations. With regard to generalizability, it should be noted that we limited our analysis to a specific geographical context (i.e., the Belgian region of Flanders and, to some extent, the Netherlands). Whether the same dynamics apply in other national settings has to be tested. Similarly, it is worth noting that our results only apply to a certain area of the performing arts, which corresponds roughly to the so-called “higher” art segment, “including opera, ‘serious’ drama, classical music, jazz, classical and modern dance, and performances in any art form that are experimental or avant-garde” (Throsby, 1994, p. 7). We deliberately chose to focus on this segment to better understand whether financial dependence could be attributed to entrepreneurial deficiencies. Demand for live performances differs substantially between popular and “niche” genres/creations, and so it seems reasonable to assume that different entrepreneurial dynamics might be observed in other, more commercially-oriented settings. A similar limitation to generalizability across art forms relates to the “service” nature of the performing arts: in this context, artistic creations are by definition *performed* in front of an audience, with obvious implications in terms of revenue models (which are constrained by time and space). Given the heterogeneity of art forms and the implications in terms of viable business models, future studies might enrich and extend the process model proposed in this contribution by identifying relevant contingencies that reflect more product-oriented art forms (e.g., visual arts/paintings) and, hence, artistic entrepreneurship.

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## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Especially ventures operating in the so-called “higher” art segment (DiMaggio, 1982a, 1982b; Throsby, 1994), “including opera, ‘serious’ drama, classical music, jazz, classical and modern dance, and performances in any art form that are experimental or avant-garde” (Throsby, 1994, p. 7).

- <sup>2</sup> “An Entrepreneurial Orientation refers to the processes, practices, and decision-making activities that lead to new entry. [...] It involves the intentions and actions of key players functioning in a dynamic generative process aimed at new-venture creation. The key dimensions that characterize an EO include a propensity to act autonomously, a willingness to innovate and take risks, and a tendency to be aggressive toward competitors and proactive relative to marketplace opportunities” (Lumpkin & Dess, 1996, pp. 136–137).
- <sup>3</sup> It is in this tradition that the concept of “cultural entrepreneurship” made its first appearance. DiMaggio (1982a) coined the concept of “cultural entrepreneurship” to describe the process through which an entrepreneurial agent succeeded in transforming the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the city museum of Fine Arts from generalist institutions mixing professionalism and amateurism into highbrow, high status establishments governed by the local elite. This study highlights how cultural entrepreneurs may engage in processes of cultural framing (DiMaggio, 1982b) and pinpoints the importance of socially constructed legitimacy for the success of cultural ventures (especially when institutional change processes are at stake). In this sense, the concept of cultural entrepreneurship is close to that proposed by Lounsbury and Glynn (2001), namely the entrepreneurial use of storytelling as a legitimation tool and a means to access new resources. On the “cultural” aspect of entrepreneurial events situated in a specific historical context, see also Johnson (2007). Notwithstanding their theoretical relevance, these perspectives focus more on the instrumental value of culture (broadly defined) to achieve other objectives rather than on the inception and growth of artistic ventures.
- <sup>4</sup> Van Looy, Van de Velde, and Vervaecke (2011) show that this is also the case for classical orchestras in the US. Both in the US and Europe, classical ensembles extract about 35% of their revenues directly from the market (ticketing/concert fees). The remainder comes from government support as well as sponsoring/donations. Note that this observation in itself seems to confirm the relevancy of the Baumol and Bowen (1965) observation for contemporary artistic ventures.
- <sup>5</sup> The cases have been selected by the research team in dialogue with a steering committee consisting of staff members of “Kunsten & Erfgoed” (Flemish Administration) and independent experts. The steering committee's involvement during the case selection process ensured representativeness in terms of growth trajectories and artistic relevance.
- <sup>6</sup> Given the focus on the chronological development of the artistic venture, the main selection criterion for key informants was their involvement in the artistic project since its inception. When only the manager or the artistic founder were available for interview(s), additional efforts have been undertaken regarding secondary sources (especially press interviews) to complement and triangulate interview data. Notice that insights obtained from artist and manager strongly coincide; this should come as no surprise as artist (founders) and managers in these ventures select each other to join the project (based on a shared, artistic vision).
- <sup>7</sup> Both descriptive reports and analytical maps for each case study are available in the extensive research report.
- <sup>8</sup> Marc Vanrunxt / Hyena and Kunst/Werk (Interview by Wouter Hillaert, Belgium is Happening—Toneelstof 80, Vlaams Theater Instituut (VTi), April 20, 2009. Authors' translation from Dutch).
- <sup>9</sup> Jolente De Keermaeker and Sara De Roo / TG Stan (Interview by Liv Laveyne, De Morgen, April 15, 2006).
- <sup>10</sup> Stef Lernous / Abattoir Fermé (Interview, Exclusiv Magazine).
- <sup>11</sup> Philippe Herreweghe / Collegium Vocale Gent (Interview, *Pukkelpop voor Bachliefhebbers*, De Morgen, January 24, 2013. Authors' translation from Dutch).
- <sup>12</sup> Matthias de Koning and Josse de Pauw.
- <sup>13</sup> Jan Zoat / Productiehuis Rotterdam on Wunderbaum (Interview by Erik Beenker and Hugo Bongers, Puntkomma).
- <sup>14</sup> Steven Tate on Thomas Hauert / ZOO (*The never-ending dance*, Flanders Today, January 30, 2008).
- <sup>15</sup> Wim Vandekeybus (flyer for the revival of “What the Body Does Not Remember” (November 2014). Authors' translation from French).
- <sup>16</sup> Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw, Henk Meutgeert's biographical note.
- <sup>17</sup> Marc Vanrunxt / Hyena and Kunst/Werk (Interview by Wouter Hillaert, Belgium is Happening—Toneelstof 80, Vlaams Theater Instituut (VTi), April 20, 2009. Authors' translation from Dutch). On the (negative) influence of critical reception on Vanrunxt's career, see also Van Imschoot (1999).
- <sup>18</sup> Frank Vaganée / Brussels Jazz Orchestra (Interview by Jacques Prouvost, Citizens Jazz, March 30, 2009. Authors' translation from French).
- <sup>19</sup> Note that Collegium Vocale Gent obtained an important four-year grant from France Telecom Foundation in 1990, which was immediately followed by structural support from the regional government.
- <sup>20</sup> Previous studies have described the work of the individual artist as situated in artistic movements or communities where the elaboration of individual styles occurs (Becker, 1982; Caves, 2000; Crane, 1968). Similarly, a vast literature highlights the role of “communities of innovators” (Crane, 1976) collectively advancing scientific and technological knowledge (see, e.g., Crane, 1972; Merton, 1973).
- <sup>21</sup> “The market environment includes those interactions between the firm and other parties that are intermediated by market or private agreements” (Baron, 1995, p. 47); “The non-market environment includes those interactions that are intermediated by the public, stakeholders, government, the media and public institutions. [...] [It] is composed of the social, political and legal arrangements that structure interactions outside of, but in conjunction with, markets and contracts” (Baron, 1995, pp. 47–48).
- <sup>22</sup> Our case data indicate that compromises and concessions to make productions (more) accessible are possible to some extent. Nonetheless, the core of artistic creations is not at stake: “every decision we make as a company has a firm artistic basis. Business is always secondary. That's pretty rare and ‘independent’ these days. You make some compromises of course, because you want the audience to understand and engage in the performance to some degree. But you stay true to your artistic framework” (Stef Lernous / Abattoir Fermé, interview, Exclusiv Magazine).
- <sup>23</sup> “They [Abattoir Fermé] don't want to do anything with or want anything from their audience! Show their work, sure. Let the people make up their own minds. They are more than able to” (Stef Lernous / Abattoir Fermé, interview, Exclusiv Magazine).
- <sup>24</sup> This is confirmed by the fact that artists are well aware that other media or genres as well as “easy-to-digest” entertainment would offer better prospects in terms of (commercial) success and financial return, and it is reflected in the development of their personal careers. While maintaining a “niche” where experimentation and artistic “research” remains the main focus, in a number of cases artists engage in parallel projects in the “commercial” sector.
- <sup>25</sup> This is often not the case for “regular” ventures in which the transition from the start-up to the growth phase in many cases results in the replacement of the founder by a “professional” CEO without jeopardizing the growth of the venture (Dobrev & Barnett, 2005; Greiner, 1972; Hellmann & Puri, 2002; Kaplan & Strömberg, 2003; Wasserman, 2008).

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## APPENDIX

### Combining artistic vision and entrepreneurial orientation

Organization	Combining artistic vision and entrepreneurial orientation
Collegium Vocale gent	We were convinced that the way we performed Bach was the only (right) way to do it. (Philippe Herreweghe / interview, <i>Pukkelpop voor Bachliefhebbers</i> , De Morgen, January 24, 2013. Authors' translation from Dutch)
Brussels jazz orchestra	It should be said that at the beginning no one used to compose for an orchestra. It has been for the 20th anniversary of the Lunds d'Hortense [jazz association in Brussels], in 96, that we were commissioned an original composition. Then Bert Joris, Michel Herr and Arnould Massart [Belgian musicians and composers] each composed one or more pieces for the BJO. [...] anyway we decided to work much more with original compositions (Frank Vaganee / interview by Jacques Prouvost, citizens jazz, March 30, 2009. Authors' translation from French)
Jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw	When Henk Meutgeert completed his piano studies in 1975 at the academy of music in Zwolle [...] he was the only one, together with one of his teachers Frans Elsen, who knew that jazz was going to play a leading role in his life. Not that he turned his back on classical music. 25 years later he merged all kinds of music in a sort of synthesis in a very special way. (Henk Meutgeert's biographical note, jazz Orchestra of the Concertgebouw. Retrieved from: <a href="http://www.koelner-philharmonie.de/media/content/presse/0101_neujahrskonzert/0101_Henk_Meutgeert.pdf">http://www.koelner-philharmonie.de/media/content/presse/0101_neujahrskonzert/0101_Henk_Meutgeert.pdf</a> )
Ultima Vez	I spent my time touring with Jan Fabre reading and writing, creating ideas and writing scenes.[...] I still had a strong connection with Fabre, and I knew that I needed to move away from that or I wouldn't be able to survive independently. And in the end I managed. I didn't work with anyone who was connected with him. As a result I have built up something that is very different. (Wim Vandekeybus / interview by Anne Colvin, <i>In conversation with Wim</i> , ultima Vez teachers pack (dance/Drama), "what the body does not remember", spring 2015)

(Continues)

(Continued)

Organization	Combining artistic vision and entrepreneurial orientation
Hyena / Kunst/Werk	From day one, there was the urge to dance in my 'own way: Non-narrative, non-psychological, non-figurative. Removing all narratives is a process that continues until today. (Marc Vanrunxt/ interview by Wouter Hillaert, Belgium is happening - Toneelstof 80, Vlaams theater Instituut (VTi), April 20, 2009. Retrieved from: <a href="http://www.belgiumishappening.net/home/interviews/marc-vanrunxt-toneelstof-80">http://www.belgiumishappening.net/home/interviews/marc-vanrunxt-toneelstof-80</a> . Authors' translation from Dutch)
Peeping tom	With Gabriela Carrizo we met while working on Alain Plate's production 'lets op Bach' (1997). [...] at the end of [that project] we wanted to do something that we really liked, to start our own creative process. (Franck Chartier / interview, <i>Une matinée avec Frank Chartier de Peeping Tom</i> , EnvrAk, January 19, 2012. Authors' translation from French)
Zoo	When he was five or six he went to a performance of 'holiday on ice' with his parents. It was at that moment that he decided somewhere in his mind, to become a dancer. After training as a teacher in Switzerland, he went to the Rotterdam academy of dance and then found himself in Anne Teresa de Keersmaeker's company in Brussels. While there, he participated in the creation of such pieces as <i>Erts</i> , <i>Mozart Concert Arias</i> and <i>Kino</i> but it was clear there and then that he wanted to be a creative artist himself. (van Kerkhoven, M., "about the work of Thomas Hauert", Kaaitheater program, Jan/Feb 2002, Brussels)
TG Stan	It is not that we were kindred spirits at STAN from the very beginning. But we were very conscious of wanting something different from what was there. And we noticed that we all felt the same way. And we always stimulated each other in our determination to achieve it. [...] None of us has ever chosen the easiest route, even though we had the chance. We have never made artistic concessions as a panic reaction: Shit, we might not have any more work soon. [...] I realize there are more interesting media than the theatre when it comes to sharing something with the world, but I believe it is important to be able to look your public in the eye. You can't do that when there are a thousand people watching. [...] it has to do with the basis on which our company is built, i.e. the passion for acting, the passion to be able to look people in the eye and try and show a part of yourself in the hope that it has the effect of helping that person in some way. [...] the day I no longer believe my opinion can have some effect on the world, however small, I won't go on stage any more. I'll stop acting. (Jolente De Keermaeker and Sara De Roo / interview by liv Laveyne, <i>De Morgen</i> , April 15, 2006)
De Roovers	Part of what we did was a reaction to the 'aesthetics' from the conservatorium. But we also reacted on each other. We watched each other's work and tried to add something unique, distinctive; something which the others didn't do/include. (Sara De Bosschere / interview, <i>De Roovers over jaren 90</i> , Toneelstof 90, Vlaams theater Instituut (VTi). Retrieved from: <a href="http://toneelstof.be/w/De_Roovers_over_de_jaren_90">http://toneelstof.be/w/De_Roovers_over_de_jaren_90</a> . Authors' translation from Dutch)
Abattoir Fermé	With abattoir Fermé, we like to think of ourselves as creators who pursue high quality work and who constantly challenge themselves. Quality is an important notion: We are not easily satisfied. We are constantly looking for an adventure, and so preferably, our work shouldn't be too predictable. [...] why I deal with extremities, is because I think an artist always needs to stretch his or her own limits. To create new obstacles, to push the boundaries, to be ambitious, really. [...] every decision we make as a company has a firm artistic basis. Business is always secondary. That's pretty rare and 'independent' these days. You make some compromises of course, because you want the audience to understand and engage in the performance to some degree. But you stay true to your artistic framework (Stef Lernour / interview, <i>Exclusiv</i> magazine. Retrieved from: <a href="http://abattoirferme.tumblr.com/post/13736375661/english-interview-with-stef-lernour-for-exclusiv">http://abattoirferme.tumblr.com/post/13736375661/english-interview-with-stef-lernour-for-exclusiv</a> ) [...] if you are looking for self-repetitive entertainment, turn on the television, read magazines or go to see one of the many other theatre companies. ('Wilfried Pateet-Borremans' (fictional character of the 'chaos trilogy'), <i>rekto:Verso</i> , May 2007. Retrieved from: <a href="http://abattoirferme.tumblr.com/post/21020568285/english-abattoir-ferme%C3%A9s-response-letter-to">http://abattoirferme.tumblr.com/post/21020568285/english-abattoir-ferme%C3%A9s-response-letter-to</a> ).