

The Show Must Go On

A Qualitative Study Examining Organisational Change Processes in Performing Arts Organisations During Exogenous Shocks

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Bachelor Thesis

Stockholm School of Economics

2025



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Abstract:

This thesis investigates how exogenous shocks affect organisational change processes in performing arts organisations by examining two case studies on Konserthus Stockholm and Kungliga Operan during the COVID-19 pandemic. Using a qualitative multiple case study with semi-structured interviews, we trace change over an extended period from pre-pandemic conditions to post-pandemic outcomes. Our findings reveal that exogenous shocks function as punctuating events that accelerate existing change, rather than create fundamentally new change. These effects depend on pre-existing organisational conditions, particularly identity and change agent–recipient dynamics, rather than the intensity of the shock alone. The urgency created by the pandemic initially reduced inertia and resistance, but organisational identity created new barriers. As identity-based resistance challenged the change initiatives, it became crucial to engage with the resistance productively by harnessing the feedback to create more effective and sustained change. Identity was found to be more malleable when new meanings were embedded within existing identity labels, consistent with adaptive instability. This study highlights that identical exogenous shocks produced different change processes depending on pre-existing problems and how strongly the threatened identity was tied to the organisational mission.

Keywords:

Performing Arts Organisations, Organisational Change, Exogenous Shocks, Resistance, Inertia, Identity

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Bachelor Thesis

Bachelor Program in Management

Stockholm School of Economics

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Acknowledgements

We would like to extend our sincerest gratitude firstly to all the participants in our interviews: thank you for sharing with us, not only your time, but your experiences, insights and reflections. Konserthuset Stockholm and Kungliga Operan, thank you.

We would also like to thank our supervisor Filip Wijkström, and our supervisor group for continuous discussion, feedback, and motivation. It has been a privilege to share this journey with all of you. We also thank our course director Laurence Romani for her guidance and Emma Stenström for her generous support.

Friends and family, thank you for your support whether it be from the desks next to ours or calls from the other side of the world.

Lastly, we thank Stockholm School of Economics and, specifically, the Department of Management and Organization. We are so grateful for everything we have learned and the impact that each professor and student has had on us, academically and personally.

Kajsa and Emma

Stockholm, 8th of December 2025

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1. Introduction

1.1. Background

In a fast-paced world with focus on innovation, growth and change with accelerating developments in the technological sphere with a spotlight on digitalisation and AI, some tradition-heavy organisations can seem stuck in time, belonging to a different era. But even organisations such as these can find themselves put in a situation where dramatic or fast change is no longer optional but a necessity. Occasionally, there are exogenous shocks that create uncertainty, demand change and affect the processes of organisational change. One exogenous shock that affected many and brought need for change was the widely discussed COVID-19 pandemic. Social distancing, lockdowns, working from home, moving things online, and the uncertainty and fear disrupted many lives and many organisations from the beginning of 2020, with effects still relevant today.

Among organisations that are slow to change and that suddenly found themselves being unable to continue their operations, performing arts organisations are central (Holst & Bekmeier-Feuerhahn, 2025). Performing arts include orchestras, operas, theatres and ballet companies, various cultural expressions that exist only in the present moment and are performed in front of an audience. When they lose the audience, they lose their purpose. The majority of performing arts organisations in Sweden receive funding from the state or region and follow their cultural policy mission. The audience is central to fulfilling the mission of these organisations and so decisions had to be made and made quickly to determine how to meet these challenges.

Not all performing arts organisations were able to remain open during the pandemic because of lockdowns or internal decisions, but in Sweden, known for rejecting harsh lockdowns, some

performing arts organisations chose to remain operational and find ways to reach their audiences. Our study will focus on two such organisations: the Concert House in Stockholm, Konserthuset, and The Royal Swedish Opera, Kungliga Operan.

For both Konserthuset and Kungliga Operan, the pandemic created a long list of challenges and their organisational change processes were affected. Suddenly they had limited time to make changes and meet the demands of their mission while still grappling with their tradition-heavy, slow-to-change organisations. The impact that the pandemic had on these organisations has allowed for an insight into what the change processes can look like in these types of organisations. Identifying cases of change, we have focused on the change process from before the pandemic, how change was initiated, how change was enacted, and what part of the changes still remain in the organisations.

1.2. Research Question

How are organisational change processes in performing arts organisations affected by exogenous shocks?

2. Literature Review

2.1. Unplanned Organisational Change and Sustainable Change

Historically, research on organisational change has been focused on planned change, but unplanned change, triggered by exogenous shocks, functions differently. Studies on crisis management more specifically have identified crises, or exogenous shocks, as “event[s] perceived by managers and stakeholders as highly salient, unexpected, and potentially disruptive” (Bundy et al., 2017, p. 1162) and capable of challenging the goals of the organisation. The events therefore give rise to unplanned changes as they threaten the survival of the organisation. In recent times, the COVID-19 pandemic (Wenzel et al., 2021) has become an increasingly studied crisis, but also central to organisational change research as there has been a rising interest, in particular regarding how implementation of new technological processes like digital transformation was accelerated (Mahamoud Hasan et al., 2025).

An issue fundamental to change literature is organisations’ inability to create change that is sustainable, that is, change that can be considered successful and lasting (Stouten et al., 2018). But as crisis management studies show fast-response survival measures (Bundy et al., 2017; Wenzel et al., 2021) there is a demand for more studies considering the organisational processes behind sustainable change – in change studies at large, but also for change as response to exogenous shocks.

2.2. Performing Arts Organisations and Covid-19

When it comes to management and organisation studies, performing arts organisations specifically have been an area of interest for researchers; Komander and König (2024) identifying 89 articles between 1972–2022 in 15 leading journals. Research on COVID-19 and performing arts organisations specifically has also been conducted as they often are tradition-

heavy and change processes become more difficult (Holst & Bekmeier-Feuerhahn, 2025). At a broad level, studies about the pandemic have highlighted existing, structural vulnerabilities within the arts and culture sector with two studies in the context of the UK, and one of UK and Argentina, which showed precarity and lack of funding (Banks & O'Connor, 2021; Comunian & England, 2020; Dinardi et al., 2024).

Many studies focus on the impact that COVID-19 had on digitalisation. Holst and Bekmeier-Feuerhahn (2025) examined digital transformation through sensemaking and strategic ambiguity, finding that the pandemic enabled more bottom-up strategies, and also described how digitalisation challenges existed prior to the pandemic and met resistance due to the nature of performing arts organisations since the initiatives challenged routines and traditions.

Vincent (2023) focused on specifically the impact of digitalisation on musicians connected to occupational deprivation. This study found that digital solutions slightly alleviated loss of community and loss of identity when this was negatively affected by the inability to play for a live audience. The negative impact of these dimensions, community and identity, was greater on self-employed artists (Dinardi et al., 2024). Identity was also central to a study conducted by Brilli et al. as they found that the new way of performing and interacting with the audience through digital platforms forced performing arts to redefine the boundaries of performance (2023).

Nixon and Davis (2024) differ from most other literature on performing arts organisations and COVID-19 as they investigated strictly non-performers. The study focused on resilience but found that employees instead resorted to maladaptation and negative coping behaviours. However, their scope was limited to England which experienced more extensive lockdowns

compared to, for example, Sweden. Due to regulatory differences between countries, there is a need for further study examining a wider range of national contexts.

2.3. Knowledge Gap and Positioning

While existing research on performing arts organisations and COVID-19 has examined economic and policy impact, digital transformation and strategies, and individual experiences of performers and non-performing employees, a critical gap remains: we lack understanding of how change is implemented by administrations, how it was received by employees, and how the relationship between these two actors determine the sustainability of the changes. This dimension is particularly critical as it also constitutes an important gap: as stated by Stouten et al. (2018), there is a knowledge gap concerning how to create successful change. In mission-driven organisations specifically, what determines whether or not change will be effective?

This study will address these gaps by using an extended time perspective, tracing the change process from pre-pandemic through several years post-pandemic in order to follow change from conception to integration by examining leadership, resistance, and identity. Theory of organisational change coupled with performing art organisations will also provide an important understanding of these challenges in the context of mission-driven organisations. Furthermore, this study will examine organisations based in Sweden, a country which had more relaxed pandemic lockdown regulations, but also a country that has yet to be analysed.

3. Theoretical Framework

3.1. Punctuated Equilibrium and Environmental Jolts

Central to organisation change, defined by Van de Ven and Poole as “observed difference over time in organizational characteristics or activities” (2021), is the distinction between discontinuous and continuous change (Meyer et al., 1990; Sutcliffe, 2021; Weick & Quinn, 1999).

One approach to discontinuous change is the punctuated equilibrium model of organisation transformation. According to Romanelli and Tushman (1994), the model views organisations as functioning in a stable equilibrium until a revolutionary period is started by a punctuating event which disrupts everyday operations and forces organisational change, after which a new equilibrium is reached. The revolutionary periods of organisational change are characterised by intense change during a limited time, and this radical change is essential in order to challenge resistance or inertia that can paralyse organisations (Romanelli & Tushman, 1994). Resistance is therefore central to the theory as it is the absence of successful continuous change that calls for revolutionary periods.

However, complex changes in the external environment or a new CEO appointment can also catalyse revolutionary periods. Specifically, “changes in environmental uncertainty, complexity, and turbulence” (Romanelli & Tushman, 1994, p. 1145) show a connection between external environment and organisational change. Romanelli and Tushman (1994) also reference so-called “environmental jolts” (Meyer et al., 1990) which are external events that causes discontinuous change. However, these do not necessarily give rise to permanent changes in the environment, and are as such also referred to as “transient discontinuities” (Meyer et al.,

1990, p. 102). Organisational actions, and the permanence of their changes, can therefore vary depending on the nature of the jolt – or the punctuating event.

Meyer et al. (1990) also describe how environmental jolts affect decision-making from leading positions as the organisational operations they may have viewed as self-evident are challenged. As the nature of the start of the jolt can be very sudden, they could be forced to determine a course of action before the consequences can be considered or understood. They posit that these decisions can be part of the new equilibrium that is reached in the aftermath of the jolt (Meyer et al., 1990).

3.2. Resistance and Inertia

Resistance is a concept that affects organisational change through actively or inactively hindering the change process, creating inertia by attempting to maintain a status quo (Pardo Del Val & Martínez Fuentes, 2003) and is often held responsible for failure of change efforts (Erwin & Garman, 2010). However, a more nuanced view is being recognised: on one hand, resistance does indeed slow down the change processes, but by stating that this is inherently bad, one assumes that change inherently is good, and that the internal and external pressure to change always are beneficial (Waddell & Sohal, 1998). In reality, resistance can reveal aspects of the change that the organisation has failed to consider (Pardo Del Val & Martínez Fuentes, 2003) and help create a stability so that the organisation can be more controlled and predictable and therefore gain a better “momentum or rhythm that is ... critical for organisational survival” (Waddell & Sohal, 1998, p. 545).

Resistance gives rise to many challenges and can take on various forms, in the formulation stage of change. Pardo Del Val and Martínez Fuentes (2003) list a myriad of sources that give rise to inertia and resistance including communication barriers, organisational silence, denial,

misalignment of management and employee interests, “lack of a creative response due to fast and complex environmental changes” (p.152), deep-rooted values and capabilities gaps. They argue that the existing values should be considered a key source of resistance, especially if the changes are more strategic rather than evolutionary. In other words, resistance to changes implemented as a response to a fast-changing external environment can be greater and therefore also warrants greater attention.

In their article on structural inertia, Hannan and Freeman (1984) describe what has increasing effects on inertia, stating that factors including age, size, and complexity of the organisation make organisations more resistant to change. They argue that as a level of reliability and accountability, or legitimacy, is expected from the external environment, stability is valued and therefore inertia can be considered beneficial. If survival is based on values that promote inertia, this would consequently mean that older organisations are more likely to experience more inertia.

The difference between the change agents (e.g. leadership or administration) and the change recipients (employees) is explored by Ford et al. (2008). They argue that the traditional view of resistance sees the employees as responding irrationally to appropriate efforts made by change agents, and that greater emphasis instead should be placed on questioning the actions made by the change agents. They see resistance not as objective fact, but rather as interpretations created by different actors and that they, in this sense, are dynamic and malleable. Resistance can be triggered by change agents through violating trust, creating perceived injustices, and communication breakdowns like failing to legitimise the change. They can also resist resistance themselves by seeing employee resistance not as potential valuable input. However, if change agents use the feedback from employees as a resource, they

can instead improve the nature of the change and the change efforts. Success in managing resistance in response to change can therefore be said to depend on “agents effectively managing the agent-recipient relationship” (Ford et al., 2008, p. 372).

3.3. Organisational Identity

Organisational identity is generally understood as “organization’s members’ collective understanding of the features presumed to be central and relatively permanent, and that distinguish the organization from other organizations” (Gioia et al., 2000, p. 64) and it is the notion of its centrality and its permanence that can affect organisational change processes. Gioia et al. (2000) argue that identity can be understood as much more unstable and dynamic and can adapt to changes to the external environment, an argument against Albert and Whetten’s (1985) *enduring* identity that has gained recognition (Gioia et al., 2013). They see the permanence of identity as belonging to labels that describes identity which leaves the meaning behind the labels malleable and more easily redefined by members within the organisation.

The notion of *centrality* creates a barrier for organisational change as what is considered central to the organisational identity is so essential for the organisation that members oppose all changes to it (Gioia et al., 2013). The “core” features that constitute an organisational identity are defined by Hannan and Freeman (1984) as the organisation’s “mission, form of authority, core technology, and general marketing strategy” (Gioia et al., 2013, p. 134) and they argue that this order of the features are the most to least unflexible and difficult to change (Hannan et al., 2006).

Gioia et al. (2013) assert that some changes to identity are not consciously planned but are prompted by other organisational or environmental changes. However, one way to adapt to

environmental changes while creating consistency and stability over time is through labels as previously mentioned; an organisation can have a continuous identity or image to present to others by changing the meanings of labels but not the labels themselves. This identity phenomenon Gioia et al. (2000) call “adaptive instability” and enables organisations to give the appearance of coherence and consistency while having capacity for adaptation and resilience against external pressures.

Ravasi and Schultz (2006) summarise some of the effects external events can have on identity, describing them as challenging what the members of the organisation consider core attributes of the organisation, question the viability of what members believe to be ‘core’. They describe how assumptions about identity can be reevaluated when faced with “identity-threatening events” (p. 454) from a changing environment.

3.4 Theoretical Relevance

This study will use this combined theoretical framework to examine our research question: punctuated equilibrium theory and environmental jolts are used to explain the timing and drivers of change while theory on resistance and inertia will provide a lens through which change processes and how they are perceived and challenged by members of the organisation can be analysed. Identity theory is important for understanding both resistance and inertia but also for investigating the significance of mission-driven organisations. Together, they provide a framework which will allow this study to analyse how change caused by exogenous shock unfolds. In particular, they explain how threats to identity can shape resistance, how resistance can both hinder and promote change implementation, and ultimately affect long-term change outcomes.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Paradigm and Approach

This study is located within the interpretivist paradigm, seeking to understand the subjective experiences and interpretations of the organisational changes (Saunders et al., 2023). The approach used to perform the study is abductive, which allows for analytical flexibility by moving between empirics and existing theory (Saunders et al., 2023).

4.2. Research Design

Our study was conducted through a qualitative research approach, structured into a multiple holistic case study design. The qualitative approach was chosen as we sought deeper understanding for the decisions made, as well as the attitudes and opinions; therefore, the data was collected through thematic format semi-structured interviews (Saunders et al., 2023). To structure our data collection and our empirics, we used Lewin's three-step model: unfreeze, change, refreeze (Burnes, 2020). As being too strict could oversimplify a process that might be non-linear, we used the model to guide our interviews thematically (Appendix 1) and asked open-ended questions and many follow-up questions. We found this approach most suitable as it allowed for flexibility and exploration while enabling comparison, both across cases and between interview subjects. Both researchers were present during all interviews, one leading the conversation while the other ensured everything from the interview guide was covered.

All interviewees were given the option between in-person interview or online interview, prioritising their comfort. We always suggested coming to their workplace, where we assumed they would feel the most comfortable sharing their experiences and thoughts. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed using Microsoft Teams, and manually reviewed and corrected to ensure accuracy. All quotes used in the empiric section have been manually translated from

Swedish to English, but the original quotes can be found in the endnotes. The length of the interviews largely depended on the participant's availability but also their level of insight (Appendix 3 and 4).

4.3. Case Selection and Sampling

We chose two cases that are similar in the way that they are artistic, approximately the same size and had a change process kick-started by the pandemic, which would enable comparability and, consequently, generalisation (Saunders et al., 2023). We initially included a third case, Folkoperan, but due to limited relevance for our research question, this case was excluded, and the associated data omitted.

Interview subjects were selected through a combination of purposive sampling and snowball sampling (Saunders et al., 2023). The interviews were largely conducted with individuals holding administrative and strategic positions, since they to a larger extent have an awareness of the organisational perspective which we are studying. But we also interviewed artistic staff, since they are further away from the strategic decision making and therefore have a perspective on how the change was experienced as an operational worker. Potential participants were contacted individually with an interview request and a then-description of the study (Appendix 2).

In total, 19 people were contacted, and 13 interviews were conducted. After excluding three interviews as we omitted the case from Folkoperan, ten interviews remained for analysis. The interviews were conducted until we reached saturation.

4.4. Data Analysis

The empirical material was analysed using a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) and we followed our abductive approach. Firstly, we familiarised ourselves with the empirics by

reading transcriptions which was necessary to enable us to choose the specific change the cases were to focus on. Secondly, we used our established structure of Lewin's three-step model to organise our broader themes after which a more theoretical analysis could take place. Lastly, we analysed the empirical data using our theoretical framework, moving between theory and empirics. Using Lewin's model to organise our study it allowed us more easily discern the different stages connected to our extended timeframe perspective as we wanted to follow change processes from pre- to post-pandemic.

4.5. Ethical Considerations

A combination of named and anonymised participants is used because of individual preferences and ethical considerations. All interviewees holding artistic positions were anonymised to minimise the risk that perceived power dynamics affected their answers. Participants who did not provide final explicit consent to be named, beyond the verbal agreement, were anonymised by default.

As one of the researchers had prior experience in the performing arts sector, we were aware of the risk that our own assumptions and interpretations could influence the interview process. This was mitigated through the researcher with less experience holding the main responsibility for asking questions and follow-up questions during interviews, while the other researcher supervised the structure of the interview guide and took field notes.

The knowledge of not being anonymous might lead to social desirability bias, but also to the risk of interview subjects not fully speaking their mind. We mitigated this through asking very direct follow-up questions whenever receiving vague answers. The self-selection bias due to non-responses or refusals was reduced by ensuring that all relevant organisational perspectives were represented in the final sample.

All interviews began with the researchers informing the interview subjects about their rights and having all interview subjects signing a consent form stating these.

All audio files, transcripts and consent forms were stored securely and were only accessible to the researchers. All interview subjects were also given the opportunity to review and approve the quotations used in the thesis before submission, to ensure that each quotation reflected their intended meaning.

5. Empirics

The empirical findings will be presented case by case. Firstly, an overview over the state of the organisation will be presented to gather an understanding of the organisation and to situate their change processes before the exogenous shock. The second part will be presented according to Lewin's three-step model, *unfreeze*, *change*, *refreeze* to divide the change process into what happened before and during the change, but also identify what effects of the change were successful and remained in the organisation after the change, and even to this day.

5.1. Konserthuset Stockholm

5.1.1. Case Background

Konserthuset Stockholm is a concert house, home to the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic Orchestra, and is an organisation of around 200 people divided into eight departments of business and administration including management, and the orchestra itself. The orchestra constitutes around half of the organisation fluctuating around 105 musicians.

At Konserthuset, the CEO also holds the position of artistic director, having creative authority in addition to organisational authority. The former CEO explains how the dual role allowed them to be the leader of the entire organisation:

“I knew this needed to be hierarchical. If I am going to lead, I will lead. I can't wait to see if people keep up. ... I'd say that this was the key to success.”ⁱ

“We almost always agreed, but in moments of doubt they would say, ‘Okay *you* need to make the decision’. And the orchestra did that as well, but sometimes I was denied with big discussions. ... ‘We have voted and 98% of the orchestra is in favour of this’, and I said, ‘But it just so happens that I'm against it’ and that was that.”ⁱⁱ

One of the decisions that the former CEO made was to start a digital platform in order to fulfil a part of their mission to have a wider reach. However, the efforts to discover new audiences required changes to the operations that not everyone was ready for. The former CEO reflects on how the start of recording performances challenged the identity of the orchestra:

“The orchestra thought that ‘we have actually chosen to work in a philharmonic orchestra, *not* a radio orchestra, because we don’t want a microphone in front of us every day’. ... Maybe not be perfectly on pitch but... ‘*what a feeling*’. If you face a microphone, you start thinking ‘I made a mistake, can we cut that?’”ⁱⁱⁱ

One way they tried to show rather than tell how this could be done successfully was by convincing a world-famous conductor to agree to be recorded:

“Everyone said: ‘you’re not making him do a digital concert? He will never agree to that’ ... When we had done it, a smashing hit ... I could ask other conductors ... and say we actually did this a few weeks ago. ‘Who did it?’ ‘Oh, it was [him]’ ‘What? Well, if he did it then we’ll do it’.”^{iv}

The platform, Konserthuset Play, started in 2013, was used to upload pre-recorded performances and around 6 performances were uploaded per season. This changed dramatically as the pandemic disrupted operations and they quickly had to pivot to live-streaming.

5.1.2. Unfreeze

Konserthuset realised the significance of the oncoming pandemic early as a musician, who had just visited, called from quarantine having contracted Covid. After an initial pause in performing, decisions to remain open for the sake of their mission were made – but not without

controversy. The former CEO, who led the organisation through Covid, says they chose the path themselves:

“‘It is your decision. We recommend: close. Politicians recommend: close’. And I said: ‘Let’s go’. And we chose that path, but it was incredibly tough. I have one age in my passport, but another age in real life.’”^v

“The worst attacks remain with me still in my heart: ‘You are gambling with our lives’, ‘I will never forgive you.’”^{vi}

However, the perception that closing completely would be to fail their mission was echoed in the administration. The business developer accounts for this view:

“We have extra great responsibility in our eyes, and the fact that we are funded by taxpayers. If we don’t work, we shouldn’t get paid, that has been our view.”^{vii}

Among those who questioned the decision, the concern came from the uncertainty and how worried everyone was, especially in the beginning. A musician remembers the initial weeks as especially unstructured, before there were any regulatory frameworks or something to align to on a national level:

“I remember that during the beginning I thought everything was a bit scary and uncomfortable. I chose to go on sick leave multiple weeks, on and off.”^{viii}

The transition to live-streaming was made easier by the fact that the company to which recording was outsourced, Nilento, was already scheduled to live stream during a festival at the end of March. The CEO asked them to start live-streaming concerts instead, and this was quickly implemented. But perhaps too quickly.

5.1.3. Change

As live streaming rapidly became part of the day-to-day operations the implementation of this new way of working came with a new set of challenges. A musician explains that they would have needed “half a year to figure out the structure [of the livestreaming]”^{ix} and that they could have done so by closing down. During the pandemic, they live streamed at least one concert a week which was later uploaded very quickly to Konserthuset Play. As the administration called for speed, musicians experienced a lack of control over their performances, as they were largely unable to affect what was published:

“If you don’t perform well enough it becomes something shameful for the rest of your life. It can be used against you in all kinds of ways if you have 20 years left of your career and something bad is uploaded.”^x – Musician

“There was [no support] during the pandemic. ... According to the administration it just needed to be done because we need to bring in money or get the audience back after the pandemic. There was no other way of doing it. And we were too shy to speak up, those who were vulnerable. I think they suffered immensely.”^{xi} – Musician

Even so, in hindsight, most seem to agree that the change could not have played out differently. However, there is a disconnect in how the change was communicated.

“I don’t think we could have had better operations during the pandemic. A determining factor was the firm leadership from the then-CEO. [They] had a clear strategy, was very careful to follow up and had a clear and continuous communication with the entire organisation.”^{xii} – Head of Production

“During the pandemic all communication from the administration was conducted over email which meant that there was no space available for dialogue and that is extremely provoking”^{xiii}
– Musician

“[Konserthuset Play] and recordings, TV recordings and such things, it’s fantastic that it exists now of course ... But back then I thought that they put us in mortal danger”^{xiv} – Musician

5.1.4. Refreeze

During the course of the pandemic the structure of live streaming was more developed and the issues that the orchestra faced have been better addressed. The musicians now have more control which has made them feel less vulnerable. Recording has become a norm for the organisation and is a part of the standard contract instead of an add-on; a stark difference to how the former CEO had to convince the world-famous conductor when others thought the idea of him agreeing to being recorded was impossible.

“We have negotiated with the trade union representatives about not having cameras close to the musicians at every production. We also have a structure where the production company, after finished recording, sends the material to our so-called ‘listening group’. This is union-affiliated as well and implies that an agreed upon number of members from the orchestra is given the opportunity to assess the final quality.”^{xv} – Head of Production

The digital platform will remain as a way of fulfilling the organisation’s mission and it has now become a much more important part of the everyday operations. Even after the high demand for digital performances during the pandemic decreased it has become a natural, strong part of the organisation:

“There are many institutions who have shut down their digital efforts completely. We will not be doing that because we have a mission to reach the entire region, as well as to work with internationalisation and expansion of the operations in various ways.”^{xvi} – Current CEO

5.2. Kungliga Operan

5.2.1. Case Background

Kungliga Operan, or Operan, is a sizeable organisation for performing arts having around 600 full-time equivalent employees. The organisation is divided into board and management, production and administration, opera, ballet, and orchestra but the division is described by interviewees as administration, opera, ballet, and the technical department. Because of the nature of performing arts, the organisation is also divided into those who work during the day and those who work evenings during the performances. Traditionally, the distance between these different departments has been substantial:

“There is also a bit of a siloed feeling in this house, apropos the ballet and the orchestra. We come together in the evenings and have a nice performance together, but during the days it can be a bit like we live in different universes”^{xvii} – Dramaturge

“It’s an organisation that is very spread out, both in time but also space. ... A theatre is built for performances, not necessarily to optimise how we work together”^{xviii} – Current CEO

The distance is also caused by a need for highly specialised employees. 150 different professions are represented, and to fulfil its mission to produce high quality performances they all need to be experts in their respective fields. This creates an environment where people have little understanding for each other’s work, furthering the distance created by time and space. The current CEO reflects on how this surprised them in the beginning:

“Perhaps I was unprepared for the complexity of the organisation, and that there are many professional groups with very many different areas of expertise was more complex than I had understood”^{xix}

The distance created an organisation where change is hard to implement as it is difficult to get all groups to adapt to change together. Even reaching the whole organisation is a challenge; not everyone works at the same time and not everyone works digitally. There is a perception in the organisation, and the industry, that you cannot get a performing arts organisation to change, something that the former CEO disagreed with:

“Getting an organisation to go in the same direction, everyone thinks that it’s impossible to do at a theatre. But it’s not. ... That’s the common perception. When I started there were many who said that yes, but this is like turning an ocean liner out on the open sea. Do you really want to spend your time on this?”^{xx}

However, they still describe how performing arts organisations differ from other types of organisations:

“A theatre needs to become more effective as well. It is just done quicker in the business sector. ... In a theatre you need to plan very far in advance, between three to five years. ... But the system knows that this is the how it works”^{xxi} – Former CEO

They were CEO when efforts were made to bring the organisation closer together and implemented morning meetings in an attempt to gather the organisation. Before the pandemic, these meetings were not successful, one interviewee did not remember them having any, stating that they had never had them. In this way change efforts were met with disinterest, but that was quickly changed by the pandemic.

5.2.2. Unfreeze

At the outbreak of the pandemic, decisions had to be made quickly to keep operations running. The CEO, backed by the board and management, had to decide on a course of action without consulting the rest of the organisation because of the time restraints. For employees, there was no time and no space to oppose some of these early decisions, for example that operations were to continue through recordings and streaming. In other words, to continue fulfilling their mission to the state and not close down. The time constraints created an environment where the timeline suddenly was not the ‘three to five years’ mentioned before.

As initial decisions were made, another dimension called for continued change: the wish to continue delivering high quality performances. It created a sense of urgency to work together and learn how to work together that had previously not existed. Specifically, for them as a performing arts organisation, this was about loyalty to the audience.

“There was an incredible sense of togetherness, a determination that we were going to do this. We are going to survive this. Everyone was aware that if we let things go now, how will we get the audience back? If you lose the audience once, it can be very difficult to get them back. ... There is a loyalty [between organisation and audience] within performing arts organisations that is almost impossible to understand. We put ourselves aside. ... You would do anything to save a performance.”^{xxii} – Former CEO

The feeling of being ready for change even in this type of organisation was echoed by the press manager:

“To change something that is already in place in an institution with several hundred [employees] can be journey. I think there was a great acceptance of things being as they were. And it was also ‘we can’t just go home we have to do something’”^{xxiii}

It became apparent that the problems they had tried to solve before, the distance between departments, was needed more than ever as communication became paramount for operations and to fulfil their mission.

5.2.3. Change

The morning meetings were suddenly in the centre of the actions to manage the pandemic. Because of the ongoing pandemic, these weekly meetings were held digitally and were recorded to ensure access regardless of working hours. Whereas the initial idea had been for the CEO to use the meetings to simply inform the organisation, they turned into an effort to work together. The CEO would be joined by guests representing different professions with the intention of creating a sense of togetherness but also for more practical reasons; it created a channel where vastly different parts of the organisation could explain how they were working and find solutions together.

“I think that [the meetings] were a direct consequence of [the need to come together]. I am unsure of whether we would have started these or continued these meetings today if we hadn’t started then, because it was a very good way to reach out with information”^{xxiv} – Press Manager

Several hundred employees would connect to these meetings, showing the clear need for information during times of uncertainty. Some weeks there was higher demand, and they increased to two weekly meetings. When people became increasingly worried about the financial situation and feared losing their jobs, the CEO decided to include this discussion in the meetings. It became a hub of communication, organisation-wide collaboration and an exchange of information that was dynamic and evolved as the organisation and the pandemic

evolved. When asked whether the efforts during the pandemic engaged everyone in the organisation two employees responds affirmatively:

“Yes, I would say so. I experienced it as very open in the collaboration between different parts of the organisation.”^{xxv} – Dramaturge, and “[The pandemic] became almost unifying, a kind of coming together... We felt a sort of belonging”.^{xxvi} – Press Manager

5.2.4. Refreeze

After the pandemic they returned to normal operations, but the morning meetings remained. Although only held once a month today, they are still structured after the idea of acting as an organisation-wide platform, led by the CEO who is joined by employees from different departments. They are still recorded for those who cannot attend and are appreciated even by those who do not join.

“No matter how many people are there, it’s still good that they are trying, I appreciate that. ... You can’t expect anyone to spoon-feed you everything you should know, so you have to be a bit proactive as well.”^{xxvii} – Musician

“There would probably be an outcry if we removed it actually”^{xxviii} – Press Manager

In retrospect, people would rather forget the pandemic times, but it was also a time where the organisation found togetherness. It became more apparent for employees that cooperation is necessary and that sometimes change is needed to achieve this. The dramaturge reflects on the cohesion during the pandemic:

“This was something new, and that meant that you could do it in a new way. It wasn’t ‘the ballet is doing this’, but this was something that all parts of the organisation were to be a part of. So, I would say that it was very successful.”^{xxix}

However, looking forward, the organisation is aware that their newfound togetherness must be actively maintained:

“This was somewhat of a special project, that it was done this way. But I don’t think that we can take it for granted now that it will be like this forever, you have to keep working with these issues continually”^{xxx} – Dramaturge

6. Analysis

6.1. Unfreeze: Exogenous Shock as Punctuating Event

The pandemic represents, for both these cases, what punctuated equilibrium theory classifies as a punctuating event as long time periods of a stable equilibrium were followed by intense organisational change during a limited time (Romanelli & Tushman, 1994). The trigger for this discontinuous change is also considered an environmental jolt, as Meyer et al. (1990) note that they can be initiated by transient discontinuities, such as a time-limited pandemic. Kungliga Operan's usual timeline of 3-5 years was reduced to days or weeks, and decisions were made quickly in both organisations which led to decision-makers having to make decisions before consequences could be understood (Meyer et al., 1990): Konserthusets CEO decision to remain open against all recommendations and Operan's CEO made changes without usual organisational discussion. As these performing arts organisations are slowed by inertia, discussed below, the pandemic created a rare situation where fast change was made possible. Even though decisions were made quickly, they still influence the new equilibrium post-pandemic; one reason for this can be that the changes had in some form already been part of change efforts: Operan had tried to start meetings and Konserthuset had a digital platform, though under-utilised. The changes could, however, be implemented after a punctuating event as it created greater urgency.

For both organisations the fast decision-making and subsequent changes were made for the sake of the mission, whether it be tax-payer responsibility or audience loyalty, or both. As the organisation's mission is identified by Hannan et al. (2006) as the most difficult core feature of an organisation's identity to change, the drive to stay true to the mission consequently affected all other decisions and changes were implemented directly to support the mission. While other types of organisations could limit risk through closure, these mission-driven organisations were

compelled to remain open. They also needed to maintain stability and legitimacy toward the external environment (Gioia et al., 2013; Hannan & Freeman, 1984). Both organisations prioritised the mission but slightly different approaches as they met differing levels of resistance. For Konserthuset, some resistance from before the pandemic grew during change implementation while the resistance from Operan was lessened by circumstance, discussed further below. This meant that Konserthuset had to prioritise mission before organisation while Operan could focus more on the organisation.

Although theory states that resistance often is greater if the environment is fast-changing (Pardo Del Val & Martínez Fuentes, 2003), the initial response was rather the opposite as there was no time and space to oppose and urgency to act (quote: “there was a great acceptance of things being as they were”). However, this was more temporary and resistance resurfaced later, especially at Konserthuset.

6.2. Change: Identity Threats and Agent-Recipient Dynamics

6.2.1 Konserthuset: Identity-Threatening Change

The change at Konserthuset turned the pandemic into an identity-threatening event (Ravasi & Schultz, 2006) as it forced musicians to shift from live performances to recording and streaming. The important distinction between choosing a philharmonic orchestra over a radio orchestra shows that performing live is extremely central to their identity and not just an irrational response to necessary change (Ford et al., 2008). The vulnerability and lack of control over the quality of their recorded performances further enhanced the threat to their identity. The change challenged their deep-rooted values (Pardo Del Val & Martínez Fuentes, 2003) of who they are as an organisation and as musicians which gave rise to resistance but also inertia

in the years before the pandemic. That an organisation of Konserthuset's size and age would have significant inertia aligns theoretically with Hannan and Freeman (1984).

The dynamic between the change agents (CEO and administration) and the change recipients (musicians) did not start out well, as resistance grew among musicians due to communication issues and a lack of trust (quote: "there was no [support during] the pandemic") (Ford et al., 2008). Musicians felt pressure to perform well while also experiencing negative emotions like fear and discomfort, with at least one musician deciding to resist change by taking voluntary sick leave. While it is important to note that some of this resistance remained uncommunicated, and therefore perhaps unknown to the change agents, one of the reasons for this was one-way communication meetings that did not encourage dialogue, and musicians were too shy to speak up. Here is a clear difference between different parts of the organisation as an administrator praises the communication of the same leader. According to Ford et al. (2008), resistance should have been managed by seeking feedback from the change recipients and at this stage of the change their input could have been harnessed earlier for smoother change implementation had it been more dynamic.

6.2.2 Kungliga Operan: Structural Inertia and Resistance as Resource

Just like Konserthuset, Kungliga Operan experienced inertia before the pandemic, but theirs was even greater. Hannan and Freeman (1984) argue that inertia is increased by the age, size and complexity of the organisation and Operan truly exemplifies this as a large, old organisation with huge complexities. Divided by professions, departments, time, and space, it is not surprising that the organisation is resistant to change. One could argue that the distance was part of their identity, as the level of expertise required across various professions could be linked to maintaining that distance, which in turn was seen as necessary for producing high-quality work. This identity would then contribute to the perception that they were as difficult

to change as manoeuvring an “ocean liner” and have this be considered beneficial. Nevertheless, the need for organisation-wide communication was already identified as a problem from change agents. But as attempts at a solution were unsuccessful, a punctuating event and revolutionary change were needed to overcome the inertia (Romanelli & Tushman, 1994). The pandemic turned an existing problem into a necessity for survival which became a catalyst for change, one large enough to shift even the divided and distanced Operan. Contrasting with Konserthuset, the change at Operan did not pose as large of a threat to their employees’ identity, and as such the resistance differs between the two organisations. This was further mitigated by Operan’s change agent–change recipient relationship.

Due to this nature of the change in the case of Kungliga Operan, it was easier to manage the dynamics between change agents (CEO and management) and change recipients (the different departments). As the need for communication and answers increased during the uncertain times of the pandemic, this trumped resistance connected to employees own perceptions of their ability to change and allowed for change efforts to succeed. The success is also directly linked to how the meetings dynamically evolved over time as change agents met demands posed by change recipients which exemplify what Ford et al. (2008) argue about using feedback as a resource to improve the change efforts. More meetings were held a week, discussions of the financial situation were added, and, most importantly, it turned from CEO simply informing to dialogue between departments. This two-way communication became crucial for the true problem being solved, it was not just about reaching every employee, it was about fostering togetherness. The way these efforts helped ensuring the effectiveness of the change, and effectively created the sense of togetherness, safeguarded the change into the future.

6.3. Refreeze: Resistance as a Resource

6.3.1. Productive Resistance

As argued by Ford et al. (2008), resistance can be used as a resource for creating better, and therefore lasting, change and this has above been exemplified by Kungliga Operan. However, as Konserthuset started with a less efficient management between change agents and recipients, the changes that lasted were made possible by negotiating through feedback from musicians. One main reason for the resistance felt by the musicians was due to vulnerability over quality control, something that through union-efforts created listening groups. Resistance, in this case, revealed elements of the change that had not been considered which were addressed with as the relationship between change actors evolved and thus had a positive effect on the change and the organisation (Pardo Del Val & Martínez Fuentes, 2003). It is important to note that both cases used resistance productively as a resource (Ford et al., 2008) but differed through Operan's early and dynamic adoption while Konserthuset's response was more reactive, which could be connected to a mission-first approach from the latter.

6.3.2. Adaptive Instability

Another reason for the successful implementation of change efforts was how the change was integrated into their identity. According to Gioia et al. (2000), organisations can adapt to changes in the external environment by embracing adaptive instability, and both organisations showed proof of this. Even though their identity was heavily threatened, Konserthuset still managed to implement digital performances as they, instead of rejecting the change due to becoming a "radio orchestra", changed the meaning behind the label 'prestigious symphony orchestra' to also include recordings and live streaming even as live performance recommenced. This shift of meaning in their identity was crucial for the longevity of the change efforts.

For Kungliga Operan, their identity was not as challenged as the shift instead concerned their identity as divided due to insurmountable reasons like time and space distance, and expertise levels. The exogenous shock showed them that they could be all at once, prestigious opera house, experts in their fields, as well as experiencing greater cohesion. All of this expanded their identity through adaptive instability and their inertia, created in part because of their own perception of change ability, was shifted through proven successful change. Their inertia is today acting as a safeguard for these changes implemented during the pandemic, as they, having reached a new equilibrium (Romanelli & Tushman, 1994) have included this identity of togetherness into their inertia in a beneficial capacity (Hannan & Freeman, 1984).

Another difference in the way the identity was integrated was how at Operan, the change became a part of the culture (quote: “would probably be an outcry if we removed it”) whereas Konserthuset also needed structural support, creating listening groups as formal procedure. This could be connected to how inertia was a more active part of the change at Operan, with the new identity embedded in organisation through their inertia, they are in less need of formal structures. However, it is very important to note that this does not mean that it can be taken completely for granted, as reflected by members of the organisation itself: “I don’t think that we can take it for granted now that it will be like this forever, you have to keep working with these issues continually”.

6.3.3. Mission Alignment

Successful integration of changes depended on how the organisation’s identity was expanded and which dimensions of the mission the change addressed. For Konserthuset, the change was more clearly concerning parts of their mission but has now become a part of that mission (quote: “many institutions who have shut down their digital efforts completely. We will not be

doing that because we have a mission to reach the entire region, as well as to work with internationalisation and expansion of the operations in various ways”) which meant that change was less easy to implement. As Hannan and Freeman (2006) state, this is the most inflexible core feature. While Operan indirectly had a connection to their mission, their changes were targeting less rigid identities by challenging their core technologies. However, as mission-driven performing arts organisations, the mission and artistic output are inseparable and change efforts will be more difficult regardless. How changes succeed and remain in the organisation is determined by the nature of the change and the organisation which will shape what strategies must be taken to enforce the change. It is important to note that these are two cases of success, even though different paths had to be taken.

7. Discussion and Conclusions

7.1. Research Question and Key Findings

This study has examined change processes during the COVID-19 pandemic through two cases from two Swedish performing arts organisations: Konserthuset and Kungliga Operan to answer the research question:

How are organisational change processes in performing arts organisations affected by exogenous shocks?

Our findings indicate that exogenous shocks function as punctuating events that can overcome resistance and inertia found in performing arts organisations, but the effect depends on already existing organisational conditions, identity, and change agent–recipient dynamics and not solely on the intensity of the shock.

We find that, rather than create change, shocks like the pandemic seemed to accelerate already existing change efforts as Konserthuset already had a digital platform and Kungliga Operan had identified the distance problem and attempted a change initiative through meetings. However, the pandemic did successfully create more urgency that could overcome resistance and inertia even in slow-moving organisations like performing arts.

The results recognise identity as a cause for resistance that can limit change, but also, in conjunction with well-managed change agent–recipient dynamics, this resistance can be harnessed as a resource to achieve deeper transformation that could lead to more sustainable change. Treating resistance as feedback is critical for successful change initiatives as exemplified by both Konserthuset and Kungliga Operan, even though the timing of this differed between the two organisations.

We also found identity to be a more malleable concept so long as the new meanings and values are embedded into existing identity labels, consistent with the idea of adaptive instability. However, the shock of the pandemic was necessary to initiate this adaptation of identity. The expanded identities later remain as the organisations enter into a new equilibrium. Identity-threatening change efforts can therefore be said to produce stronger resistance but if effectively managed through agent–recipient relationships it can also yield a more successful change.

The difference between the two cases reveals that change processes affected by the same exogenous shock is shaped by pre-existing problems, how these problems are connected to their identity as mission-driven organisations and how the change is managed. The same pandemic shocked both organisations but affected change processes differently and led to different changes based on different approaches.

7.2. Theoretical Contributions

In this study we built on identity theory by distinguishing identity-threatening from identity-expanding changes, especially connected to timing. Even though both cases showed the positive dynamics in the end, having a good change agent–recipient relationship earlier can create more sustainable change sooner. For identity-threatening changes, early adoption of productive resistance, using it as a resource, can create more sustainable change with less need for correction later on.

7.3. Limitations

Some limitations to this study are connected to the fact that we chose two cases connected to COVID-19. The pandemic was unprecedented, and though we can learn from it, not all exogenous shocks are the same or have the same effects. It has also been a few years since the

pandemic, which was necessary for our post-pandemic sustainable change perspective but retrospective interviews risk post-hoc rationalisation and potential memory bias. We tried to mitigate this by informing interviewees ahead of time that we were going to discuss the pandemic, and some interviewees expressed that they had sifted through old documentation to recall past experiences, but this can hardly be compared to a study conducted as those experiences happened. Lastly, this study was conducted in the context of Sweden where less strict pandemic regulations created special conditions compared to other national contexts.

7.4. Recommendations for Future Research

Connected to our limitations, there are a few suggestions for future research. Firstly, other types of exogenous shocks should be explored to compare these findings to ours and how changes processes are affected beyond pandemics. Different sectors, both within arts and culture, non-profit organisations, and commercial organisations could also be compared to see how exogenous shocks compare across contexts. Finally, this study invites additional research into the post-pandemic change sustainability for example by tracking the changes from our two cases, or similar cases to see if they still remain 5–10 years from now.

7.5. Concluding Remarks

This thesis has addressed a knowledge gap regarding specific organisational change processes in performing arts organisations during exogenous shocks. Because of our extended time perspective, we have been able to trace change processes from before COVID-19, to the outbreak, to the critical phases to several years after the pandemic was over. By analysing performing arts organisations, tradition-heavy and with great inertia and strong identity we could examine these dimensions through the lens of mission-driven organisations.

Through the particular focus of this thesis, we have also been able to identify two cases of organisational change that were successfully implemented in a field where this notoriously difficult because of strong traditions and routines. Our cases show that even organisations with strong inertia can achieve sustainable change when exogenous shocks come as a catalyst and are sufficiently leveraged. Going forward, the question remaining is: how is this change achieved without exogenous shocks?

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Appendix

Appendix 1: Themes for Interviews

Before the Interview

Explain the purpose of the interview and how it contributes to your research

The interview subject signs the GDPR form

Inform the participant about the opportunity to read relevant parts of the thesis for validation

Ask whether the participant wishes to remain anonymous

Ask for permission to record and transcribe the interview

Warm-Up Questions

Questions about the interviewed person and their role in the organisation

Organisation Identity

Questions about how the person views the organisation's culture, stance on innovation and tradition as well as its role in the external environment

Change Identification

Questions to identify one specific change as well as its drivers

Lewin's Three Steps

Unfreezing (Before the Change)

Questions to map out the situation before the change and what needed unfreezing

Changing (During the Process)

Questions about how the change process unfolded, resistance and communication

Refreezing (After the Change)

Questions about how the interview subject saw the change in retrospect and whether it has become a natural part of their everyday life

Closing

Giving place for reflections and additional comments

Appendix 2: Interview Invitation (translated to English)

Hi [name]!

Our names are Emma and Kajsa and we are two students from the Stockholm School of Economics who are writing our bachelor's thesis within a pretty broad subject: "Organisational management in performing arts". The organisations we thought we would investigate are Kungliga Operan, Folkoperan and The Concert House.

We wanted to ask you if you by any chance would have time to meet us sometime within the next few weeks? Since you hold [position at organisation], we think it would be incredibly valuable for us to hear about your perspective and your experiences!

A bit more about what we would like to understand through our research:

We are extra interested in change processes where new solutions have been required. One aspect of this we find especially interesting is the fact that "performing arts organisations" not only are profit driven but has more complex driving forces than other organisations – to measure the success of change with other parameters than profit is thus something we are curious about. We also want to understand the processes behind finding ways to balance the preserving of traditions while remaining contemporary relevant.

Again, it would be interesting to hear about your insights and thoughts on this subject! We can come to your working place or meet you digitally – whatever suits you best.

Let us know if you have any questions. If you prefer to talk by phone, this works: [phone number].

Best wishes,

Emma Alrikson and Kajsa Söderström

Appendix 3: Interview Sample - Konserthuset

Name	Role	Tenure	Employed during Covid	Date	Length
–	CEO (Former)	20+ years	Yes	15/10–25	2:21:40
Susanne Rydén	CEO (Current)	1+ years	No	4/11–25	31:08
Vincent Hashmi	Business Developer	5+ years	Yes	22/10–25	1:04:00
Charlott Runevret	Head of Production	10+ years	Yes	4/11–25	46:02
–	Musician	30+ years	Yes	28/10–25	1:09:04

Appendix 4: Interview Sample – Kungliga Operan

Name	Role	Tenure	Employed during Covid	Date	Length
–	CEO (Former)	10+ years	Yes	11/11–25	1:02:09
–	CEO (Current)	1+ years	No	12/11–25	41:18
Katarina Aronsson	Dramaturge and program manager	10+ years	Yes	17/10–25	56:52
–	Press manager (Former)	15+ years	Yes	17/10–25	1:04:36
–	Musician	30+ years	No	13/11–25	1:00:49

ⁱ ”Och då kände jag att det här blir hierarkiskt. Ska jag leda så leder jag. Jag kan inte vänta utan de måste hänga med ... Och det vill jag då säga var nyckeln till framgången”

ⁱⁱ Vi var nästan alltid överens men i tveksamheter så sade man ‘okej Stefan du tar beslutet’ och det gjorde även orkestern: jag blev nekad ibland med stora diskussioner.

”vi har röstat och 98 % av orkestern är för, och jag sade ‘men nu råkar det vara så att jag är emot’ och då blir det så”

ⁱⁱⁱ Orkestern kände ju att ”vi har faktiskt valt att jobba i en filharmonisk orkester, *inte* en radioorkester, därför att vi vill ju inte ha en mikrofon varje dag framför oss. ... kanske inte vara helt perfekt i pitch men *vilken feeling*”. Har man en mick framför sig så blir man så här: ”ah, nu gjorde jag ett misstag, kan vi klippa där...”

^{iv} ”alla sa: Du ska väl inte få honom att göra en digital konsert. Han kommer ju aldrig gå med på det där. Så jag gick och frågade. ... Han var ju intresserad av ljudet. Och det var ju orkestern också. ... Så när jag då hade gjort den, en smashing hit, då kunde jag säga till alla andra dirigenter ... ’vi gjorde det faktiskt för bara nån vecka sen’. ’Vem var det med?’, ’ja med [honom]’. ’Va? Har han gjort det, då gör vi också det.’”

^v ”Det är ditt beslut. Vi rekommenderar: stäng. Politiken rekommenderar: stäng. Och jag sa: Kör. Och vi valde den vägen, men det var oerhört slitsamt. Jag har en ålder i passet, men en annan ålder i verkligheten.”

^{vi} ”De värsta attackerna, som fortfarande sitter i hjärtat: ”Du leker med våra liv”, ”Jag kommer aldrig förlåta dig”, den typen av grejer.”

^{vii} ”...Så vi har ju ett extra stort ansvar tycker vi, och att vi är skattefinansierade. Och om vi inte jobbar ska vi inte ha betalt, har varit vår inställning.”

^{viii} ”Och jag minns att jag precis i början tyckte det här var lite läskigt och obehagligt och jag vet, jag sjukskrev mig flera veckor av alltså av och till så där”

^{ix} ”Vi hade behövt ett halvår för att det är så hitta en struktur”

^x ”Att man inte presterar tillräckligt bra och då blir det skämskudde i resten av livet. Som kan vändas emot en på alla möjliga sätt om man har 20 år kvar av sin karriär liksom och sen ligger det något som är dåligt.

^{xi} [Inget stöd] just då under pandemin ... Enligt administrationen var det är bara att göra för att vi måste få in pengar eller få publiken tillbaka efter pandemin. Så det fanns det ett inget annat sätt att göra det på. Och vi är liksom för blyga för att säga ifrån också, de här som var utsatta. Jag tror de led otroligt.

^{xii} ”Jag tror inte vi hade kunnat bedriva verksamheten bättre under pandemin. En avgörande faktor var den fasta styrningen från vår dåvarande VD. Han hade en klar strategi, var mycket noggrann med uppföljning och hade en tydlig och kontinuerlig kommunikation med hela organisationen.”

^{xiii} ”Under pandemin skedde all kommunikation från administrationen över mejl vilket betydde att det inte fanns något utrymme för dialog och det var otroligt provocerande”

^{xiv} [Konserthus Play], inspelningar, TV inspelningar och sånt där som nu är fantastiskt att det finns förstås ... men då var det liksom, då tyckte jag nog att man utsatte oss för livsfara”

^{xv} ”Vi har förhandlat med de fackliga parterna kring att kameror inte ska vara nära musikerna vid varje produktion. Därutöver har vi en tydlig struktur där produktionsbolaget, efter avslutad inspelning, skickar materialet till vår så kallade lyssningsgrupp. Även detta är fackligt förankrat och innebär att ett överenskommet antal orkestermedlemmar ges möjlighet att bedöma den slutliga kvaliteten.”

xvi ”Det är många institutioner som har lagt ner sina digitala satsningar helt och hållet. Det kommer inte vi göra eftersom vi har ett uppdrag att nå ut i hela regionen och också att jobba med internationalisering och spridning av verksamheten på olika sätt.”

xvii ”det finns ibland också en känsla av stuprör i det här huset, apropå det här med baletten och orkestern. Vi sammanstrålar på kvällen och har en fin föreställning ihop, men under dagarna kan det vara lite som att vi lever i olika universum.”

xviii ”Det är också en verksamhet som väldigt utspridd i både tid, men också i rum. Ett teaterhus som det här är ju inte byggt som ett modernt kontor, det är en teater eller byggt för att kunna göra föreställningar, inte nödvändigtvis optimerat för att jobba ihop på olika sätt.”

xix ”Jag var kanske oförberedd för just organisationens komplexitet och liksom att, det är så väldigt många olika yrkesgrupper med väldigt mycket olika expertisområden, det var mer komplext än jag förstod.

xx ”Och hur man får en organisation att dra åt samma håll, och alla tror att det är omöjligt att göra det på en teater. Men det är det inte. ... Det är liksom den stående bilden. Och när jag började så var det många som sade ja, men det här är som att vända en atlantångare ute på öppet vatten. Vill du verkligen ägna din tid åt det?”

xxi ”Alltså en teater måste effektivisera sig också. Det är bara att det går fortare i näringslivet. ... På en teater är det väldigt lång framförhållning, mellan tre till fem år. ... Men systemet vet att det är så det fungerar.”

xxii ”Men det fanns ändå en oerhörd samhörighetskänsla av att, men vi ska banne mig klara det här. Vi ska överleva det här och alla var ju införstådda med att, släpper vi allting nu, hur ska vi få tillbaka publiken? Tappar man publiken gång, då kan det vara jättesvårt att få tillbaka publiken. ... Och överhuvudtaget vill jag säga att det är lojalitet som är nästan ofattbar inom konstnärliga institutioner. ... Då sätts jaget åt sidan. ... Men man gör allt för att rädda en föreställning.”

xxiii ”Att göra om någonting som redan är inkört på en institution som har flera hundra [arbetstagare] och det kan ju vara en resa i sig. Jag tror att det fanns en stor acceptans för att tillvaron då såg ut som den var. Och det var också här: Men vi kan ju inte bara gå hem liksom, vi måste göra någonting.”

xxiv ”Jag tror att [mötena] var en direkt konsekvens av [behovet av att samlas]. Jag är osäker på om vi skulle ha påbörjat de här eller fortsatt med de här Frukostmötena idag om vi inte hade börjat då, för det var och är ett väldigt bra sätt att komma ut med information.”

xxv ”Ja, det skulle jag säga. Jag kände det som att det var väldigt öppet i samarbetet mellan olika delar av organisationen.”

xxvi ”Det där blev också nästan en enande, alltså att vara en samlande kraft... Vi kände någon sorts tillhörighet.”

xxvii ”Oavsett hur många som är där så är det ändå bra att de försöker, jag uppskattar det. ... Man kan inte förvänta sig att någon kommer att skedmata dig med allt som du borde veta, så man måste vara lite aktiv också.”

xxviii ”Det skulle nog bli ett ramaskri om vi tog bort det faktiskt.”

xxix ”Det här var någonting nytt, och då kunde man ju också göra det på ett nytt sätt. Det var ju inte så att ”baletten gör det här”, utan det här var någonting som alla delar i organisationen skulle var med. Så jag skulle säga att det var väldigt lyckat.”

xxx Det här var väl ett lite speciellt projekt, att det gjordes på det sättet. Men jag tror inte att man kan ta för givet att nu kommer det vara så här för alltid, man måste ju hela tiden jobba med de frågorna.”