Leadership as a performing art: leadership training pedagogies as found in performing arts programs in higher education

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LEADERSHIP AS A PERFORMING ART: LEADERSHIP TRAINING PEDAGOGIES AS FOUND IN PERFORMING ARTS PROGRAMS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

by

Yoav Kaddar

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Leadership as a Performing Art:
Leadership Training Pedagogies
as found in Performing Arts Programs
in Higher Education

by

Yoav Kaddar

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to present a case in favor of the educational value of performing arts pedagogies beyond the aesthetic training that they offer especially in regard to the field of leadership education.

Through a qualitative lens, this study looks at graduate training programs in orchestral conducting, choreography and theatre directing. It examines the particular pedagogies used in performing arts program and discusses their possible transfer to other leadership-training disciplines. The study includes interviews with university presidents with a performing-arts background, instructors of performing arts leadership programs and current students undergoing such training. Further data was collected through site visits to several programs as well as a review of a number of program web sites.

Results of the study support the idea that an experiential, hands-on approach as found in leadership training programs in the performing arts gives students effective leadership experience in preparation for a professional leadership role. With that said, the study found that leadership programs in the performing arts have room to emphasize social and theoretical facets of leadership.

The study does not present the performing arts as quintessential leadership-training programs. Rather, it argues that pedagogical models found in the performing arts could augment the experiential training currently absent from leadership-training programs in other fields. The study suggests that curricula for leadership-training programs should adopt a less formulated, lecture-style classroom methodology and lean more toward an experiential, hands-on learning approach that is more prevalently use in performing-arts training models.

Keywords:
Leadership training; performing arts; experiential learning; studio learning; effective leadership; art; leadership; hands-on training; training techniques.
Acknowledgments

As a performing artist, I have learned that the magic an audience witnesses on stage cannot be achieved by the work of one individual. It is very much a collaborative effort, one that is made possible by a superb supporting cast, devoted technical crew and an effective production team. It seems the same can be said for researching and writing a dissertation. I could not have endured and reached its completion without the support and inspiration of mentors, colleagues, friends and family.

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I. Introduction

“Leadership is an art, something to be learned over time, not simply by reading books. Leadership is more tribal than scientific, more weaving of relationships than amassing of information.” (DePree, 1987)

Although arts and aesthetics are not conventionally looked upon as congruous with the subject of leadership and management, the creative process as found, within the performing arts could be more closely related to effective leadership skills than has been commonly perceived. This study explores the processes that are used in each of the disciplines within the performing arts i.e., orchestral conducting, choreography or theatre directing. It examines the ways by which such skills are taught, if such skills can be translated into practical leadership traits, and how best to teach and apply such methodologies to leadership training programs in other fields. The hands-on experience that characterizes most performing arts programs seems to be missing from other leadership training programs that are more theory-based. This study advocates for the merging of both ends of the spectrum; both the theoretical and the practical approaches in training future leaders.

At times when the general view of the arts is that they are only for a selected social group “as bonbons for a leftist elite” (Pogrebin, 2009); at times of budget cuts and financial constraints on educational systems, and especially at times when awareness that conventional leadership preparation programs need to change in terms of their teaching methods and curricula structures, the arts should not be downplayed for their importance within society. “The arts provide jobs as other industries do” (Progrebin, 2009). The arts also have contributions and a place within education and leadership training in particular.
Indeed, the arts could potentially contribute to society and education beyond the superficial attributes of entertainment and beauty that usually come to mind when thinking of the arts.

This research looks at training methodologies used in performing arts higher education programs that train leaders such as orchestral conductors, choreographers and theatre directors. It examines the possible benefits of such techniques and how they might contribute to leadership training programs in other fields. From preliminary research it seems that such contributions by the arts have gone un-tapped. As we head into the twenty first century the message about the reality of the arts in the United States is clear: The arts, generally, and the performing arts in particular, are still undervalued in education. Art courses are not considered a top priority in education nor an item that would be supported in times of budget cuts limited resources, or competing priorities (Cherbo & Wyszomirski, 2000). Hence, the purpose of this study is two-fold: a) to bring new training techniques to the area of leadership education programs b) to bring recognition to the performing arts and their contributions to education beyond the more common perception that the performing arts merely hold entertainment value.

Throughout history, the arts have had an important role and place within education. In ancient Greece, the arts were placed at the heart of all education and seen as potentially shaping a person’s character both positively as well as negatively. Similarly, in the Romantic period, scholars such as Shelly, Goethe, Schiller, and Wordsworth saw the important contributions to culture and society in arts education. They understood
aesthetics and the path the arts can pave in their contributions to humanism. Later, philosophers like Tolstoy and Dostoyevsky attributed the arts as having liberating and almost releasing powers. Both believed, as in earlier periods, that the arts could have a very strong and grounded humanistic effect on society; Tolstoy imagined that true art could unite humankind, and Dostoyevsky believed in the power of beauty that the arts possessed and that “beauty will save the world.” Creativity expert Sir Ken Robinson challenges the fundamental way that we look at the arts and especially within education. “Creativity now is as important in education as literacy. It needs to be treated in the same status. We are educating children outside of their creative capacities” (Robinson, 2006).

Departing from traditional views, this study will draw on a different source of insight regarding the arts and their possible contributions to society and education. The purpose of this project is to shed light on the possibilities and contributions that the arts, and in particular the performing arts, can bring to education in terms of quality in leadership pedagogy, techniques, and training. Thus, this is a study of leadership training programs as found in the performing arts. Its findings could contribute to the current discussion on reforming the method of leadership preparation programs as found in higher education. Currently such programs seem to focus mainly on the increasing pressure by external constitutes (i.e., business, parents, students) demanding fundamental change and significant improvement in schools regarding educational outcomes and accountability (i.e., test scores, higher graduation rates, placement in leading colleges and employment) (Thompson, 1994).
Pressure on educators has increased as education has turned into both a political tool and financial commodity. In the past this might have been a federal concern and had political motives (e.g., Nation at Risk). One can find that although education is still strongly influenced by political agendas (e.g., No Child Left Behind); there are a number of other external forces that are pressuring the education establishment to restructure how they function and “do business.”

The business world has taken a strong interest in the “quality control” of education, as have parents and students who, more than ever, look at education as an investment for economic growth and development. “We all have a huge vest in education, partly because education is meant to take us into this future that we can’t grasp” (Robinson, 2006). Education takes center stage at times of economic turbulence. “Economic forces and educational equity issues have combined to heighten calls for improved education for all students” (Conley, 1993). With the current economic climate and the restructuring of the American economic machine come heightened implications to the education establishment. This situation will “require a highly educated work force” (Massy, 2009 NYT). Demands on colleges and universities will increase in a situation that is already constrained by state and federal support.

Education is seen more as a means to an end rather than a destination in terms of career development. In the past, there were no specific demands or expectation of education. It was enough to attend and graduate from school with no real expectations of how effective an educational experience was in regards to preparing one for a specific professional
career and financial success. “Accountability” and “Assessment” were terms more often related to the lexicon of the business world than an educational one.

But these recent changes are a result of what is referred to in the field as “systemic reform” (Thompson, 1994). This reform has evolved from the acknowledgment that the social and economic structure, nationally as well as globally, has changed. This new approach to education is an overall plan, not only in terms of education leadership. It is a whole new concept, a rebirth, of what shape education should take as we move into the twenty-first century. In trying to improve learning processes within higher education, the focus has turned from the more traditional “knowledge-transfer” approach to a more “interactive” approach, one in which the student is a participatory actor rather than a passive audience member. This method is used across a variety of disciplines within education, as well as in medicine, business and management (Kolb & Kolb, 2005;2006). There is a movement toward a more “activity-focused pedagogy” (Massy, 2009 NYT).

Educational leadership must stay abreast of current changes in education. There needs to be a collective support for such change on all levels and especially at the top levels of education management and administration (Barkley and Castle, 1993). There needs to be a total “rethinking the very structure of the education system” (Education Commission of the States 1991). Most importantly, in training new generations of educational leaders, who will be charged with such duties and be expected to have the skills to navigate these responsibilities, new and creative training methods need to be introduced and training programs restructured. For example, in the preparation of superintendents to lead
through this “fundamental reform . . . our images of bold leadership and the people who exercise it” must be altered (Murphy, 1991). To successfully deal with such challenges, a balance between theory and practical knowledge needs to exist (Dewey, 1904). There needs to be an open and smooth connectivity between explicit and tacit training. Leadership is an amalgamation of science and art where rules and principles need to be creatively applied (Klann, 2004). How this “dialectic movement” can be addressed in leadership training programs is a central question within “education administration program reform” (Meyer, 2003).

A close look at programs for leadership preparation within the performing arts reveals that methodologies used in such programs could shed some new light on current, more conventional leadership training methods that are currently used in other leadership training programs in higher education. Although each discipline within the performing arts (e.g., music, dance or theatre) was looked at separately, common pedagogical methods were found. Similar techniques, course formats and syllabi structures point to a common teaching thread within the arts; one that brings fresh approaches to leadership training in other fields (Educational Administration, Administration and Management, etc.).

The findings of this research point to a practical approach of training as found in performing arts programs; one that is characterized by hands-on courses and “real life” situations. The data are based on the fields of orchestral conducting, choreography and theatre directing on the graduate level. Within those areas the study focuses on
interviews with leaders in higher education who have a performing arts background in leadership roles, instructors who teach graduate courses in these areas and graduate students enrolled in such courses.

The research of this project focuses on institutes of higher education in the United States. The schools were picked for the performing arts leadership programs they offer (i.e., orchestral conducting as found in music, choreography as found in dance, or directing as found in theatre). The study concentrates on the practical and theoretical components that each program offers and the implications these methodologies may have on the effectiveness and outcomes of such training.

This project examines the possible benefits that leadership-training programs in the performing arts could offer to other leadership courses. It also looks to identify weaknesses in such programs within the performing arts and what might be learned from leadership-training programs in other disciplines. Looking at training processes of three leadership performing arts (conducting, choreography and directing) this research does not try to compare the three or find how they differ from one another. Rather, this work is designed to examine them as a whole. This study was done through an ethnographic approach, looking at the context of the discipline called the performing arts and identifying what makes such programs unique, if at all.

This study explores the processes that are used in each of the disciplines within the performing arts where orchestral conducting, choreography or theatre directing are taught. Leadership-training programs in the performing arts seem to focus more on the
art and the acquisition of technical skills and put less emphasis on verbal and social skills. The hands-on experience that characterizes such performing-arts programs seems to be missing from other leadership-training programs where training is more theory-based, using pedagogical techniques that “lack the potentiality” to train leaders for “on the job” situations (Sogunro, 2004). By exposing students to both ends of the spectrum, the theoretical and the practical approaches might better equip future leaders with the knowledge and skills when entering the profession.

While there continues to be willingness to introduce more experiential approaches to leadership-training programs by some universities, and the introduction of practical courses is increasing within leadership preparation programs (Murphy; Louis, 1999), one could point to another distinctive feature of leadership programs in the performing arts: the personal, physical presence that a leader in the performing arts needs to be engaged in order to do his work. This is a personal involvement and “interaction” (Goffman, 1967) that orchestral conductors, choreographers and directors must engage in while working with their ensembles.

To be a leader in these three areas (i.e., orchestral conducting, choreography, or directing), one has to be in the trenches with the troops; the leader needs to perform right there and then. Leaders in the performing arts need to adjust to real-time circumstances and take action on the spot like today’s leaders who need to make swift and perfect decisions (Sogunro, 2004). Thus, the level of exposure and vulnerability of such leaders differs, for example, from that of a leader of an educational institute or other organization, who has a few degrees of separation between him and his followers. The
latter leader has the advantage of being at a distance from a situation; he can evaluate and take action somewhat removed from it all, in a detached sort-of environment where his emotions and physical presence are not exposed. This in turn decreases the “face-to-face behavior” (Goffman, 1967); the level of physical interaction between leader and followers is minimized. Thus, a buffer is established that otherwise would expose a different facade and quality of the leader to his followers. In the performing arts, a conductor, for example, learns and makes mistakes in public, in front of the orchestra. He learns his art and refines his leadership skills, on the podium, while engaged in the act of leadership, in public.

This study tries to make the case that leadership programs in the performing arts can be used as models for other leadership programs in terms of effective training methodologies and techniques in the acquisition and application of leadership skills and competencies. This study works to bring recognition to the performing arts as an educational tool beyond the more commonly thought of entertainment significance and value that they hold. In his book *The Artist as Citizen*, Joseph Polisi (2005), President of the Juilliard School in New York City, discusses these positive contributions that the arts can bring to society. In his writings, Polisi acknowledges the potential that lies in the arts as being able to greatly help increase the understanding of the beauty of our sheer existence on this planet as well as helping to enhance the quality of the human experience. To begin to unveil such possibilities, we need to “start to reconstitute our conception of the richness of human capacity” (Robinson, 2006) and embrace a diverse approach to
education; one that in the context of leadership training, is as open, flexible and creative as it expects its graduates to be.

II. Statement of the Problem

“Accept mutation,” and “modernize remembered values” (Weick, 1996)

Despite the current awareness that conventional leadership preparation programs need to change in terms of their teaching methods and curricula structures, when addressing the more practical needs of the field rather than focusing on theory and research, little has been done on the ground. In the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) review, Pohland and Carlson (1993) state that there has been “little evidence of dramatic departure from traditional program component or delivery systems.” Although efforts at some programs were made to enact new reforms, “most leadership preparation programs remain [ed] in the 1990’s much as they were a decade or even longer ago” (Duke, 1992; Thomson, 1993). Some of these findings are still relevant as we enter the twenty-first century. Partly at issue is the growing understanding that the overuse of theory is hurting the field of leadership training, and that continuing to go down this path is undermining the discipline in terms of its educational effectiveness in preparing leaders to enter the profession. It appears that traditional theory-driven teaching techniques in leadership education seem to lack the ability to produce effective outcomes (Sogunro, 2004; Murphy & Louis, 1999). Despite efforts at some institutions to transform leadership pedagogy, most educational leadership-training programs continue to train future leaders by using “old school” methodologies (Murphy & Louis, 1999).
The effectiveness of traditional training techniques continues to be debated. A call for reform in the discipline of leadership training has been voiced since the 1980’s and 1990’s (Girffiths, 1988; Murphy, 1993; Achilles, 1994; Weick, 1996). The pursuit of change in the field goes back to the middle of the twentieth century. At the core of the perennial reluctance for change, especially within academia, is a tug of war regarding what leadership is. Is it “more an art or more a science?” (Klann & Cartwright, 2004)

This marriage between leadership pedagogies and science began in the mid 1940’s and 1950’s with the so-called “theory movement” as calls for reforming what were then current leadership-training techniques used at most programs (Murphy & Louis, 1999), which included mainly theory-based courses. The change to the curricula came as criticism was growing of the strong presence of education administration faculty who were characterized as practitioners. These professionals brought their practical experience into the classroom. Their preference to more practice-based pedagogy styles and methods rather than research and theory-based pedagogies (Marland, 1960) was questioned. Hence, the idea of leadership education as a science was born; advocates for this reform suggested that this subject should be learned by reading literature pertaining to the field and by absorbing theoretical information as much as possible through lectures and presentations. This turn towards theory brought the discipline closer to the social sciences and was recognized as such.

Although the theory movement did not plant firm roots or yield any major changes in the field in but a few universities, it did have a far-reaching effect on many educational
administration programs, their curriculum and their faculty (Culbertson, 1965; Murphy, 1993). This trend continued and peaked in the early 1980’s with a sustained regard for the value of theory. It was manifest by attention to more theory-based courses. Furthermore, it had an impact on faculty hiring. Individuals with a background that complemented a scientific and more research-based teaching were preferred over those instructors who taught based on their professional experience (Miklos 1983; Newell & Morgan, 1980). At that time and within the circles of the social sciences, the notion was that leadership preparation and the education of future administrators went beyond training through the acquisition of tasks and skills. It was necessary to be exposed to and master the theoretical realms of this so-called “science,” going beyond the technicalities of a craft (Miklos, 1983).

With the end of the twentieth century, the theory movement fizzled out. The 1990’s saw a decline in support for the use of theory-based curricula in educational leadership programs (McCarthy & Kuh, 1997). Administration and leadership-training programs that were centered on the social sciences were criticized for being removed from the reality of the professional field; the curricula as well as the methods of teaching seemed to be alienated from the reality of the field itself (Griffiths, 1988). Further assessment of the discipline emphasized the lack of specific courses and curricula and called for higher standards within the discipline of educational administration. Critics of such training programs also pointed out that these programs “lack cohesion and grounding in principles of cognition or leadership” (Van Berkum, Richardson, & Lane, 1994).
There was a growing understanding that overuse of theory was hurting the field. This has led to the contention that the framework dictated by the social sciences, which of over-emphasized the “hypothetico-deductive approach,” undermined the discipline in terms of its educational and practical effectiveness (Murphy, 1990). The lack of a more qualitative approach, now evident, once again, has resulted in renewed drive for reform.

For the past ten years, a fresh perspective regarding the educational administration discipline has developed. “Although the reform rhetoric has been much stronger than actual changes in practices, there is recent evidence that some university units are redesigning their preparation programs” (McCarthy, 1999). Emphasis on more qualitative and practical approaches seems to have shifted and programs are assessing and restructuring their courses and training methods. This new tactic comes with an interest in establishing closer connections between educational leadership preparation programs and leadership in the professional field (Murphy & Louis, 1999), a position supported by such organizations as the National Policy Board of Educational Administration (NPBEA). The NPBEA and other advocates for programmatic changes argue for a move (back) from the conventional leadership preparation models that are characterized by theory-based courses to the more applied and hands-on work. They call for infusing more courses with content and educational activity closer to the reality found in the field. In actuality “real-life” contexts and experiences include field-based research and internships as the central building blocks of curricula in such programs (Goodlad, 1994; Sizer, 1988, 1991).
Why, then, have leadership preparation programs not yet achieved these over-due reforms (Achilles, 1994)? Supporters of qualitative, practitioner-based reforms face not only reluctance within their discipline by faculty and individual departments and programs. The central obstacle to such change maybe found within the establishment called academe. Any change from the norm in academia is a challenge (McCarthy & Kuh, 1997). At the core is the idea that research is esteemed more than applied experience and knowledge. Higher education and research universities in particular “have not given high status to applied research and have relegated field-based and other outreach activities to a distant third tier in the reward system” (McCarthy & Kuh, 1997). Although advocating that faculty be more connected with their field, universities have still favored scholarship based on research and publication over professional activity in real-world settings. Contact with the profession in the form of practical work and firsthand experience is supported, but only in theory and not in practice (Clark, 1989). This disembodiment exists as the academe and most academics continue to live in their heads. They are disembodied from the realities of the professions that they train and educate students for (Robinson, 2006). Hence, graduates are not fully prepared for their profession as they have no practical experience in their training and probably were trained by instructors who have had no practical experience within the profession. This causes a situation where training programs are “once-removed” from the reality of the profession.

More than the resistance to change within the academic walls of knowledge, there seems to exist an even deeper philosophical divide from an epistemological perspective. In an
article published in *Human Relations* (2003), Robert Chia examines the relationship between the acquisition of knowledge and how it is translated into “pure experience.” Specifically, Chia examines how East Asian cultures transfer knowledge into action. One of the central points he makes is the existing “rupture between academic tendencies and practitioner priorities” (Chia, 2003) that are prevalent in Western culture. As mentioned earlier, the academe favors and is inclined to support research-based scholarship in the form of publications that look at the world through the “why” lens. Generically speaking, it is less inclined to use the more practical lens and look at the “what” in terms of the “how” – what needs to be accomplished that could potentially ensure a preferred outcome that is closer to the “real” (Chia, 2003).

### III. Literature Review

**Being a Leader**

“*Grand dreams don’t become significant realities through the actions of a single person.*” (*Kouzes & Posner, 2002*)

Effective leaders are the driving force behind any organization. They set the course, the vision, and orchestrate the strategies that move an organization forward (Blanchard, 2006). With well over 600 college campuses and special leadership centers across the country that teach leadership courses, it seems that the perfect leadership-training program is yet to be developed (Miller, 1997). More recent statements and books that have touched on the issue of quality leadership in our society ask the same basic question: “Where have all the leaders gone?” (Iacocca, 2007). In a continued search for the quintessential leader, one of the main questions that keep surfacing from literature
regarding leadership is whether leaders are born or made (Mintzberg 2006). Mintzberg states that the quality of a leader is the combination of both the person (i.e., natural abilities) as well as training (i.e., the acquired skills) he or she receives. Other scholars in the field point to similarities between art and management (Boettinger, 1975; DePree, 1987; Klein, 1999; Kelehear, 2006) especially in terms of acquiring leadership traits and the “craft of leadership.” These skills cannot be acquired through reading or delving into the theoretical aspects of the subject alone. Those educational approaches only give a limited and superficial perspective of the subject (DePree, 1987; 1992; Chia, 2003). It is through application and hands-on-based methodologies and training techniques – the kind that are more commonly used in the performing arts – that those skills can be attained (Kurpers, 2002).

In Leadership Jazz, Max DePree (1992) examines the parallels between the art of leadership and the art of jazz music. In nurturing a leader and preparing for leadership, DePree points out that there are no quick fixes or shortcuts. Like a rich casserole cooking over a low flame for a long duration, creating and becoming a leader takes time. It is through actual experience, through learning what the tools of the trade are, such as becoming familiar with the needs of both one’s organization as well as the needs of those who make it run, i.e., a leader’s followers, that a leader matures. It is through failure and success-by falling and being able to recover and start over, by being prepared at times to be wrong that a leader acquires the wings that will carry him through the turmoil and success of effective and productive leadership. The seminal American modern dance choreographer Martha Graham once said that it takes ten years to create a dancer
(Freedman, 1998). This might hold true in the education of a leader. It is through training and education as well as the sheer experience in “doing” the craft that a leader is born.

But there is more to leading an orchestra or a cast of dancers or actors than the practical experience in doing so. To lead any such group through a creative process requires physical presence. One cannot lead any performing arts group from behind a desk in an office situated on the top floor of an administration building. Leadership takes place in the field, in the trenches. It is an emotional, physical process; one that is beyond the cognitive, which deals with behavioral symbols, and one that involves the “participation in any contact with others” (Goffman, 1967). In researching social behavior, Erving Goffman’s principal methodology focused on the use of ethnographic studies. Through observation and participation rather than statistical data gathering his theories provide an “ironic insight into routine social actions” (Blackwood, 1997). In his book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman (1959) discusses the techniques and strategies a person uses in their everyday “social intercourse” in presenting oneself and one’s activities to others. Goffman uses theater as a metaphor and “stage management” to explain how and what we engage in while trying to communicate certain images of ourselves to those around us. It is this same live “presentation” that a conductor, choreographer or director is constantly engaged in; one that such artists need to deal with and need to master in order to lead their ensemble. The nature of these leadership positions in the performing arts calls on these leaders for “on-the-moment” performance and being engaged in the “presentation of self” (Goffman, 1967). Such behavior makes them somewhat vulnerable, as they need to react and perform spontaneously as leaders.
Their reactions and manners in which they conduct themselves are immediately taken in, judged and reacted to by their troupe (i.e., performance ensemble). These behavior patterns and etiquette could influence how effective they are as leaders.

In terms of leaders and their contact within their “leadership environment,” consider behavioral routines and techniques used by animals. Leaders of packs are present physically and win over their followers through their behavioral etiquette and actions. A lion cannot win over his pride of lionesses unless he defends his turf and is physically present to send off any rival male lions. If the lion would choose to stay at a distance and would not be engaged physically in defending his “property,” his leadership would be in question and certainly would not be as effective.

Cited in some circles as one of the country’s top ten organizational development specialists, Peter Vaill (1991) is known for his ideas on what he has termed “permanent white water”—the turbulent social and organizational conditions that managerial leaders face. Vaill maintains that the challenges that face any ensemble leader in the performing arts (e.g., orchestral conductor, choreographer, or film/theater director) are similar to the challenges faced by leadership and management in other fields. “Forms of dynamic, goal-directed action occurring under pressure and responsibility” (Vaill, 1991) are most often affiliated with effective leadership. Communication skills and people management are other such sought-after skills looked for in leaders (Blanchard, 2006). These can also be found among the skills of leaders within the performing arts; they are commonly used by orchestral conductors, choreographers, and directors. Such leadership traits are found in the core of any creative process (i.e., production). Like Vaill, other scholars in the
field also argue to the extent that: “Art and leadership are close in actual practice” (Smith, 1996). Leaders of jazz bands richly exemplify such similarities.

A jazz band is a “summary of an organization” (DePree, 1992); it captures the basic concept and the multitude of facets and complexities that characterize most large organizations. This ensemble group of artists comes together to create both a shared vision as well as that of its leader. Each jazz artist is an individual and an important part of the band. Each, in turn and simultaneously contributes to the end product. They all perform as individuals yet collaborate as a collective ensemble-as a team. It is teamwork that will produce results. Teamwork and effective leadership are key to an effective organization. A football team that lacks an effective quarterback as well as coordinated offensive and/or defensive teams will not score points. It is the synchronization of all groups of a team that produces results. “Teamwork is what makes the Green Bay Packers great. People who work together will win-period” (Iacocca, 2007). It is leaders of teams, companies, organizations, as well as ensembles like a jazz band or larger musical ensembles or for that matter a choreographer working with a group of dancers, or director directing a cast of actors, that have the unique opportunity to lead by stimulating the best in each member of their team. It is this concept of serving others (Greenleaf, 1996) and not oneself that a leadership skill can be identified. DePree (1992) identifies such ability as vital and essential in any leader’s toolbox. But as much as leaders are essential to the organization, bandleaders in turn are dependent on their band members.

Leadership is a two-way street, a give and take, a dialogue. The work and accomplishments of any such team or organization is determined by the work of the
whole, not the individual. “Everything we accomplish happens through teamwork . . . followers really determine how successful a leader will be” (DePree, 1992). Like the jazz band, this is also true of other ensembles in the performing arts; it is teamwork that produces and creates the magic that comes alive on stage. It is not the sole work of an individual but the collaborative harmony of the whole that is at the core of the performing arts. A leader with no followers is not leading. “Grand dreams don’t become significant realities through the actions of a single person” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). When a leader acts in such a collaborative manner it liberates the power in others and grants them the independence and confidence to bring out their best qualities and skills. It creates an environment of collaboration and motivation for the good of the group. “Empowering others is pulling them, not pushing them; it is translating intention into action and sustaining it. It is moving people from believing to doing to becoming” (Fairholm, 1988). Leadership is the ability to give those who work in one’s organization the confidence to believe in their abilities and worth.

In some of the leading literature on the subject of leadership, the writings of Peter Drucker (2002), Jack Welch (2001), and Robert Waterman (1993) point out that productive and successful organization and management skills reside in the detail and attention a leader gives to the human factor within an organization. In the performing arts, literature shows a similar and parallel philosophy. To effectively communicate through their arts, artists need to be fully present and aware of the world in which they live and are a part of as citizens (Polisi, 2005). Educating future artists involves bringing such awareness and exposure to more than the technicalities, the craft, or even the
creative processes of their art. Nurturing artists for the twenty-first century should present these future artists with a knowledge that expands beyond the arts to such social realms and intricacies in areas as politics, economics, and social behavior (Polisi, 2005). As a member of society the artist, and especially a performing artist, cannot shut himself from the environment in which he lives in. His actions, his performance, his art is a direct product of the social sphere in which he exists. It is during most creative processes that such awareness to humanness exists. This process materializes through the practical application of knowledge in which a production is worked on from inception to culmination. The ability to organize a working process, to work with other people and guide them in the direction of a specific vision while being a good communicator and respecting those who work with you, are the essential tools of the craft for any leader in the performing arts (Catron, 1989) and could be applicable to leaders in other fields.

**The Artist and Leader**

“For Jazz, like leadership, combines the unpredictability of the future with the gifts of individuals.” (DePree, 1992)

Ernest Fleichmann, former executive director of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, highlights three stages in the training of future orchestral conductors. The first of these staple “ingredients” includes the fundamental and basic music education tools any conductor should acquire. These consist of the mastery of one or more instruments, a basic knowledge of music composition as well as music theory, harmony, and music analysis. Next, future conductors should work closely and be exposed to the great conductors in the field, to gain inspiration. Such maestros should act as role models in a young conductor’s education during his or her career journey. The third stage, says
Fleischmann, should focus on practical experience; an application of theory and classroom work into the actual “doing” of the art (Polisi, 2005). Fleischmann points out that such practical experience on its own does not necessarily translate into artistry but that putting knowledge into action will eventually lead a conductor from technique into artistry.

It is the hands-on and “live” experience that is the most beneficial pedagogical tool and one that future conductors, choreographers, and directors should be exposed to and should acquire during their training. Learning through doing is vital and important in the training of such leaders (Blom & Chaplin, 1982). Leadership can be “characterized as much by its artfulness as by its skills and technical sites” (DePree, 1989; Vaill, 1991).

Providing students with practical experience is one of the main objectives of leadership training in the performing arts. Examples can be found in theatre training programs for theatre directors. At Brown University (2007) for example, the graduate program in directing focuses on the preparation of future theatre directors. The course in many ways is similar to the basic requirements regarding the training of orchestral conductors. Like the future conductor, there is a need for the student director to be well versed in the basics, such as rudimentary acting technique, text analysis, theatre history as well as a grounded knowledge of theatre literature (i.e., the reading of plays) (Brown, 2007). These objectives can also be attained through exercises such as leadership role-playing as well as through the practical application of directing a scene, a one-act play, or a full theatrical production. In addition, directors in training should acquire a basic knowledge
of stage composition and the various technical aspects involved in mounting a theatrical production.

Through a two to three year training progression that brings all required traits and knowledge together, culminating in the actual mounting of a production from inception to actualization, directing students get a comprehensive training program. Such a program exposes them to both practical and theoretical aspects of their art. For example, students in the directing program at Brown are expected to direct “projects including new plays, contemporary/modern work, and classics” as well as establishing a close relationship between student and the professional field by assisting in two Trinity Rep mainstage productions (Brown, 2007). A similar approach is used in dance programs where student choreographers gain their experience through a hands-on application of theoretical knowledge (Sarah Lawrence, 2008). In each of the three arts there is a gradual progression in training, from leading a small group to the complexity of leading a large cast of dancers, actors or a musical ensemble, in a full production.

It is during such a creative process (e.g., rehearsals, production meetings, and individual coaching) that a theatre director’s craft and artistic skills are used and are continuously refined (Glenn, 1973). It is a director’s responsibility to pull and lead both the ensemble and creative team (i.e., the cast as well as designers and technical crew) together to bring the play to life. For example, the MFA program in Directing at Boston University’s College of Fine Arts focuses on theatrical techniques that include such “pragmatic aspects of the profession” to enhance team work and collaboration (UB, 2007). In his book *Organizations as Theatre*, Iain L. Mangham (1990) states that in honing his craft
the director faces the challenge of gathering and building a working productive ensemble; a group that collaboratively enables the director to clearly communicate his artistic vision and bring the play to life. Communication abilities are essential in such environments. It is through such an experience that effective leadership is formed (Hodge & McLain, 2005).

In his book *Adhocracy*, Robert H. Waterman Jr. (1990), describes adhocracy as an organization that “breaks with tradition, cuts across old boundaries, and pulls the right group of people together . . . coming together to find solutions to common problems.” In essence, adhocracy gets the job done by going beyond the more traditional organizational structures and policies such as top-down or even bottom up models. The composition of an adhocratic organization lends itself well to organizational structures within the performing arts where collaboration resides, almost naturally, in the nucleus of most creative ensemble structures. Collaboration and teamwork do not necessarily imply that such an ensemble is homogenous. A wide pallet of talents and traits comprise and contribute to a successful team. Each member is an important part of the whole. It is the individuals and their attributes that create an effective and productive whole. An organization is a direct reflection on both its leaders and their followers.

A common point that one finds within leadership training, in both education and the performing arts, is that leaders take on their leadership role aspiring to make a change. “They gaze across the horizon of time, imagining the attractive opportunities that are in store when they and their constituents arrive at a distant destination” (Kouzes & Posner,
Leaders are attracted to take on leadership positions in pursuit of changing the way that things are and creating something that no one else has ever done before; a fundamental skill that is commonly found in leaders within the performing arts, and a trait that is at the core of any creative process. It is the skill that is involved in the creation of the new and giving it life.

No matter the discipline, to lead effectively leaders need to inspire a shared vision (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). By comparing literature used in educational administration programs with material used in performing arts programs that address the subject of leadership training, this study brings forward the idea that although parallels exist and similar objectives are present in both programs, pedagogical approaches and methods of teaching and training leadership skills differ.

### The Educational Value of the Performing Arts

“Art is an aesthetic experience that simultaneously engages body, mind and sensibility, thereby connecting reason and emotion in a synthetic way.” (Dewey, 1958)

Not only can the arts make significant contributions to the larger concept of the human experience but they might be poised to present some new perspectives and solutions to current discussions regarding reforms within education and especially in regard to leadership-training programs. Teaching is a craft, an art (Davis, 2005; Sarason, 1999; Grumet 1993; Eisner, 1985). Beyond the benefits of the arts for arts’ sake, the arts education through the arts could augment the quality of life through their unique characteristics. “We think about the world in all the ways that we experience it.
Visually, through sound, kinesthetically, in abstract terms and through movement” (Robinson, 2006).

Polisi (2005) makes a central point about the “artist as citizen”, and that it is through education that this arts-as-life-affirming concept needs to be re-introduced to the “collective American psyche.” The arts could present new ideas to an array of areas. In terms of this study, the performing arts underscore some revitalizing effects and could bring new perspectives and changes to leadership-training programs that so desperately need it (NCP, 1990). In our primary and secondary schools, in our institutions of higher learning, and through our performing arts institutions, there is an overall consensus that the arts do contribute to a better education. It is through education that, the process of understanding and appreciating some of the benefits of the arts, this can happen.

Literature and research about the benefits of aesthetic production argue that education in the arts not only makes one a well-rounded person but, among a list of further attributes, the arts nurture better communicators. At its recent conference at the Monaco Dance Forum, aDvANCE, the International Organization for Transition of Professional Dancers that is based in Switzerland, presented the results of its four-year international study of the transition of professional dancers to post-performance careers (Pier, 2005). One of the findings that the aDvANCE Project found was that performing artists, especially dancers, are noted by employers in other fields to be of great economic value to any organization as they are “highly motivated, disciplined, good team players, excellent at
following directions, accustomed to rigorous work, punctual and extremely able to present themselves well” (Pier, 2005).

Still, “as arts and aesthetics do not fit into the economic imperatives of an objective-ridden rationality, with its orientation towards control and its goal of maximizing profit” (Goethals; Sorenson & Burns, 2004), one gets the impression that the arts have no practical importance or relevance to our daily lives. “Our education system is predicated on the idea of academic ability” (Robinson, 2006). Education came to meet the needs of industrialism. The most useful subjects for work (i.e., math and sciences) are at the top of the curricula hierarchy.

Although not seen on the surface and most often neglected, the performing arts are a powerful and effective communicative tool (Boettinger, 1975). Training programs within music, dance, and theatre might be natural environments where, for example, motivation, discipline, collaboration as well as leadership traits are taught and encouraged and co-exist within programs that train, first and foremost, in artistry. With a continued effort to improve learning techniques within higher education, focusing on experiential methodologies, such as those used in the arts, could stimulate new approaches to teaching. The arts have traditionally fostered such methods of learning, more so than other disciplines like education administration or business and management (Boggs et al., 2007; Kolb, 2005). This would also apply to programs in leadership education as well as to leadership programs in other disciplines (Kupers, 2002).
Attributes associated with this “new” form of leadership in education will include having a clear vision, willingness to take risks that come with any change and, most of all, a willingness to “challenge the status quo” and not just maintain it (Cambron-McCabe, et al., 1991). In other words, leadership training should focus on the ability of leaders to bring about change; doing so practically and creatively. For this transformation to take place it will require the work of the organization as a whole, as a team. The ability to bring together and build a community that will support such change will be another skill this new brand of leaders will need to master (Lewis, 1989). The demands on education leaders will continue to increase. One of the main objectives of these reforms will advocate decentralizing our education system. Leaders are called to take on more responsibility in terms of decision-making, policy implementation, personnel, and overall responsibility for day-to-day management and local control. The guiding idea is to shift such tasks from Federal and State governments into the hands of local education leaders (Conley, 1993).

Knowledge Acquisition

“To be taught to read—what is the use of that, if you know not whether what you read is false or true? To be taught to write or to speak—but what is the use of speaking, if you have nothing to say? To be taught to think—nay, what is the use of being able to think, if you have nothing to think of? But to be taught to see is to gain work and thought at once, and both true.” (Ruskin, 1927)

Although there have been recent efforts to bring a variety of reforms to higher education in terms of learning and teaching processes, this trend is not new. Looking at ways knowledge is transferred and acquired has been on the academic agenda before (Kolb &
Kolb, 2005). Research continues to prove that experiential learning is effective, especially in enhancing student’s “metacognitive” abilities (e.g., Cleave-Hogg & Morgan, 2002; Gopinah & Sawyer, 1999; McGlinn, 2003; Stienborg & Zaldivar, 1996). Such innovative interactive, student centered approaches in synthesizing acquired knowledge and skills to “real-life” situations have been adopted in a variety of disciplines, including medicine, business, psychology as well as in education (Kolb & Kolb, 2006).

In the 1970’s and 1980’s “Learning-in-Action” was one such attempt, by the Center for Advancing Principalship Excellence at the University of Illinois, to introduce a new approach (Silver, 1987). Among the objectives of such initiatives was the exploration of the “other alternative,” such as role-playing and simulations of real-life working scenarios (Murphy, 1992).

This technique of “active learning” or learning through “doing” has long been the backbone of East Asian cultures (Chia, 2003). In contrast, Western cultures rely on the “knowing” style when it comes to the acquisition of knowledge, also referred to as the “alphabetic” way of learning (Chia, 2003). Acquiring knowledge through the written word goes as far back as Ancient Greece. Aristotle insisted that the knowledgeable person is one who is able to articulate the “cause” of things, giving a persuasive rationale, and therefore being able to teach them to others. The “ignorant man”, on the other hand, only experiences things. This could be the reason why the educational establishment in
Western cultures, i.e., “academe”, preferred the written “alphabetic form of knowledge” incorporating explanation over action, and reasoning over doing (Chia, 2003).

According to Eastern philosophy, the “alphabetical” cultures, those responsible for the invention of the written word, and especially for the development of print, have created the “isolated thinker” (Ong, 1967). Eastern thinking also believes that the self is a by-product of the constantly evolving realm of social relationships. Therefore the written word is seen as removing the individual, i.e., the reader, from reality and from the live experience of feelings and emotions that derive in such a communal context (Chia, 2003). In the subject of Aesthetics, this social connection and experience is referred to as “sensory knowledge and felt meanings” in relation and reaction to objects and experiences (Hansen; Ropo & Sauer, 2007).

In Western culture, a preference for action over words does exist; it is prevalent in the arts and particularly in the performing arts where mastery and craftsmanship appear to develop only through direct experience and adaptation (Dreyfus, 2001). In the arts “action is perfected through application and often without the need for intervention by the written word” (Chia, 2003). This is not to say that there is a detachment from the written word in the performing arts but to emphasize that the process of the acquisition of knowledge in the arts is centered in a direct, continuous investigative practice. “Abstract explanations can be helpful in bringing us from a novice status to one of competence. But proficiency and mastery cannot be attained without direct unmediated involvement” (Dreyfus, 2001).
Another aspect of training in the arts and, in particular, in teaching creativity is the ability to see clearly, with no pre-conceived ideas, in an innocent and naïve fashion. It is what the art critic John Ruskin refers to as “quintessential to any form of training or education in the arts and crafts” (Ruskin, 1927). This almost Zen-like state of mind or purity in thinking and decision-making, a vision free of distractions, is one of the guiding philosophies behind the Japanese word sunao, a philosophy adapted by one of Japan’s most outstanding businessman in the twentieth century, Konosuke Matsushita (Chia, 2003). “When a person looks at things with the sunao mind he is open to experience them as they are” (Matsushita, 1978). In relation to administration and leadership such freeing of the mind could allow it to “adapt itself effectively to new circumstances” (Chia, 2003).

As one can discern from the previous paragraphs, both the Eastern philosophy of experience and Western training programs within the performing arts align themselves well. In both, there are indications that knowledge is attainable through gaining experience that is rooted in being in the moment; being present, experiencing a situation through our senses, as opposed to the meanings we can assume to acquire in the absence of experience. Leadership education through reading and other “realist ways of knowing . . . one has to be there and experience the situation to understand it . . . to know what it is like” (Hansen et al., 2007).

In the article “Management the Music Paradigm”, Richard Donkin of the London Financial Times (1999) writes about business managers experiencing such a feeling; the
feeling that conductors experience standing in front of an orchestra. One participant described such an occurrence as being very real; like communicating something that comes right back at you and that all at once “you feel the emotions of all those people working together.” Feeling this interaction live, emotionally, and through the senses is what Chia (2003) refers to as the “ultimate reality”; that which cannot be reached cognitively but only felt emotionally through the senses.

Such ultimate true experience is gained through interaction in a social environment, which stimulates our senses, feelings and emotions. It is learning by doing, by being a part of an experience as opposed to reading about the experience or theorizing about it. In their article on Aesthetic Leadership, Hansen et al (2007) refer to such an interactive experience as one that is “made, shared, transformed and transferred in relationships by ways of interaction.”

Leadership is about such relationships and interactions and the connections between leader and followers. “Managers need to perfect their skills in dealing with people . . . great leaders inspire those who work for them” (Boettinger, 1975). Leadership develops through a “social process” (Barker, 1997) but thus far, focus in leadership programs has been on the “individual and cognitive rather than on such interaction” (Fairhurst, 2007).

Leadership qualities need to be promoted within a social context rather than a learning environment in which research and investigation foster individuality and seclusion.
Thus leadership preparation programs should reflect a more “student-centered approach”, one which involves the student in the learning process and eliminates “student anonymity” (McCarthy, 1997). It is an approach that takes on a “studio” method of teaching that involves a more activity-focused pedagogy (Massy, 2009). Such methodologies and techniques focusing on group learning would bring forward experiential knowledge, unlike a conventional management program where the emphasis of the teaching is text driven, experienced by the student in an isolated environment and where the experience is gained through “telling and theory” (Boggs et al, 2007).

“Team approaches to instruction” (Shakeshaft, 1993) in leadership training can produce a learning environment that might be able to offer such a learning experience. The cohort, for example, offers a support system that nurtures community and a shared learning experience. Cohorts encourage a collaborative working environment--one that cohort students carry with them as future leaders to their work settings. The cohort as a “learning organization” fosters a model for collegiality and cooperation values that these future leaders will emulate in the field. Cohorts have become an important tool in leadership training (Yerkes, Basom, Norris, & Barnett, 1995). Such learning environments can enhance student understanding of leader-follower interaction. Pedagogical techniques used in the training of future leaders that incorporate role-playing models (Sogunro, 2004) have the potential to give students a more realistic leader-follower perspective.
The use of role-playing teaching methods is not new. Role-playing or the simulation (Kirkpatrick, 1987; Cranton, 1989, 1992; Eitington, 1989) of real life experiences and circumstances is defined in a variety of terms and headings, which include sensitivity training (Hershey, 1985; Eitington, 1989), psychodrama and sociodrama (Monreno, 1953; Harris, 1985; Ments, 1989); action learning (Eitington, 1989) or just plain “drama” (Ments, 1989), in which the use of acting methods to develop managerial skills, focusing on communications and leadership, is used (Mockler, 2002). One of the main objectives in introducing role-playing into the classroom is to give students an opportunity to articulate and materialize specific behaviors within a given situation with an objective of acquiring desired and practical experiences (Sogunro, 2004).

The technique of learning by simulating certain situations lends itself well to teaching the acquisition of specific [leadership] traits. Such prevalent skills that characterize an effective leader include communication skills and swift and perfect decision-making (Sogunro, 2004). Being directly involved in the moment, experiencing the process and operation within any given situation accelerates the acquisition of knowledge in the most direct way (Eitington, 1989; Sogunro, 2004). According to Johnson and Johnson (1997) “the more real the role-playing and the more effective the exercise, the more emotional involvement you will feel and the more you will learn.” In other words, such direct involvement through role-playing could bring about new ways of handling a certain situation; it could bring about a change in behavior and attitude that otherwise would not take place if approaching a situation by means of theory only. By taking on a role that differs from one’s own, one is encouraged to view a situation or problem through a
different lens. This prompts the participant to analyze and question the situation from a different perspective. This in turn brings an awareness of one’s own role, and a better understanding of other people’s roles and points of view (Ments, 1989, 1999; Cranton, 1992).

In Eastern Asian cultures in “ultimate reality”-based learning, knowledge comes from the doing, the “experimental practice” and not by way of the “detached actuations of abstract causes via the written word” (Chia, 2003). The act of actual application makes the learning experience for the student complete and efficient. The more conventional training methods rely heavily on “removed” educational experiences; those which focus on theory rather than practice and which do not give a realistic (and practical) view of the craft. Role-playing has a “greater transferability to the workplace than do didactic lectures of abstract discussions about leadership” (Hughes et al, 1993). By using role-playing methodologies in the arts the focus is on “student expression of ideas and skills” (Kolb & Kolb, 2005) rather than on conveying information through a “text-driven approach that emphasizes telling and theory” (Boggs et al, 2007). Furthermore, it is about process and reflection: “The process of creating, reflecting and considering alternative points of view” (Davis, 2005) and changes. In the performing arts, being a part of the [creative] process is to observe, give feedback and be engaged in the “overall analysis of the total activity” (Eitington, 1989). John Dewey (1934) referred to art’s ability to create experiences and recognized how art “does not operate in the dimensions of corrective descriptive statement but in that of experience itself.”
Practice vs. Theory

“Knowing is more often achieved directly through the immediate engagement of tasks rather than through the acquisition of abstract written signs and symbols.” (Chia, 2003)

The question of practice vs. theory is not new. Silhak or the Practical Learning School is a method that existed as early as the eighteenth century in Korea, dedicated to instill the practical approach to statecraft (Practical Learning School, 2007). Theory-based learning vs. practice-based learning has been addressed and examined through a variety of lenses. It has been a point for discussion in various fields not only in reference to education. In the seventeenth century the French mathematician and philosopher Blaise Pascal addressed the importance of practical experience as relevant to problem solving in mathematics. Pascal believed that this type of knowledge is what mathematicians speak of as their “intuition” and the ability to know the truth. “We know the truth not only through our reason but also through our heart” (Pascal, 1960). In the early twentieth century, John Dewey argued that in the training of future teachers there is no doubt that “adequate professional instruction [of teachers] is not exclusively theoretical, but involves a certain amount of practical work as well” (Dewey, 1904). This discussion continues and is very much alive as we move into the twenty-first century.

The debate continues to fuel the central question regarding which approach and methodology is superior. It is not only related to the education and training of future leaders for management positions in education but in a variety of other fields. Lee Schulman’s “signature pedagogies” (2005) document addressing the preparation of teachers as effective educators and makes direct references to such fields as business, medicine, government, and law. As past president of the American Educational Research
Association and Professor of Education and Psychology at Stanford University, Schulman’s philosophy supports the idea of integrating knowledge-based and practical-based training for teachers, which is also at the core of most “leadership” programs in the performing arts. Schulman makes a case that, in law and medicine, there is a strong inclination towards practical training, suggesting that hands-on knowledge is a better tool for preparing students for a profession; a technique that guides and is in use in programs that train conductors, choreographers and theatre directors.

From the perspective of this study, this tug-of-war as to which approach is better suited to leadership training, has shifted from favoring the more explicit, scientific, and theoretical approach to that of the more tacit, hands-on, practical method. For the most part, higher education courses have followed the more scientific route in terms of leadership-training programs. Discussions concerning the differences between theoretical and practical understanding, between academic and practitioner journals, and issues of practice vs. theory continue to be current research topics within the academy (Bolton; Stolcis, 2003). The dilemma of how to educate and which approach is best suited in training future leaders in the practical elements of their profession, is one that continues to exist. To some degree this quandary is preventing innovative approaches from being adopted into leadership-training programs, approaches that could improve such programs and help improve the training of a new generation of leaders.

Some scholars in the field of leadership and management argue that the academic approach to training is too “scientific” and that there has been a misleading, false model
in training future managers and leaders, and future practitioners (Weick, 1983; Robinson, 2006). Embracing a similar philosophy, others believe that the work of administrators in education is one that involves the “doing” of the work and involves less of a “science” and more of “a craft” (Blumberg, 1984). Furthermore, this line of thinking contends that effective and efficient leaders in education acquire most of their skills on the job rather than coming prepared to take on such positions through explicit, theoretical knowledge they acquired during their educational training.

These are tensions, which Lee Schulman in his book *The Wisdom of Practice* (2004), notes as clear and obvious “tensions that exist between these approaches of theory and practice”. This “gap between science and action” (Meyer, 2003), is healthy and should be able to co-exist in a productive environment. In Schulman’s view these tensions are “essential” and “unavoidable” similar to those “found within families whose members have become highly dependent on one another.”

Practice and theory should go hand in hand. Literature seems to point to a disconnection, a separation that could be compared to two magnetic ends that refuse to connect (Schulman, 2004). This study attempts to bring to the foreground the idea that such a separation should not exist. A continued effort to bridge and find new methods of maximizing what each approach can contribute to the other and to the overall preparation of future education leadership should be further investigated. A combination of theory and practical training might have a place in leadership-training programs. It is a method of training that provides students with situations and models in the classroom (both in
theory and practice) that they will encounter in real-life professional circumstances (Blom & Chapling, 1982).

Believing that theoretical training should take precedent, John Dewey (1904) still understood that without the practical aspect of the training the theory component would lack “any immersion in contexts and condition of practice” (Dewey, 1904). Leaders are practitioners. “Leaders must act . . . without actions or principles, no one can become a leader” (DePree, 1993). To that extent, the application component in the training of leaders and managers needs to be reflected in programs that embrace both theory and practical training, without one method taking precedent over the other or sacrificing realistic learning and effective preparation for the profession. If medical students training to be physicians are required to go through theoretical as well as practical-based training before the conferring of their degrees, and if pilots graduate flight school, only after completing both theoretical studies and practical training that include a certain amount of actual hours flying a plane, why should future leaders be trained any different?

This study suggests that like those training models found in flight schools or medical schools, there are models in the performing arts that reveal similar training methodologies. In the training of conductors, choreographers, and directors this research shows that a case can be made for both theoretical and practical knowledge to be combined. For example, the Master of Fine Arts Program at the University of Maryland specializing in choreography emphasizes an education in both the theoretical and practical aspects of the art of making dances. The focus is to “prepare the student for
entrance into the professional world” as a choreographer (UMD, 2007). Leadership is truly a craft; an art (DePree, 1987) and a preparation of practitioners that have the theoretical and the practical knowledge to navigate their professional field should be reflected in the training models that they are engaged in.

With analysis of leadership programs in the performing arts, this study brings new insight to leadership-training programs that could help merge both the theory and practice techniques needed in current leadership programs. Such an amalgamation of practical and theoretical techniques could contribute effective methodologies to leadership-training curricula.

The subject of leadership continues to evolve as the character of organizations is changing as well as that of the leaders who run them. “Future organization will be more like networks than like hierarchies” (Stewart, 2001). Leaders will be asked to be more susceptible to the changing climate of the organizations they head, to the social environment in which they exist, and the economic climate they cater to. With organizations becoming more “loosely coupled,” and functioning in a more horizontal configuration rather than in one that is influenced by hierarchy and control, leaders will need to exercise more openness and democracy (Slater, 2001). As with a jazz band, leadership will be dependent on the ensemble, the team. Leadership of tomorrow will need to be “an institutional capacity, not solely an individual trait” (O’Toole, 2001). Leadership, as pointed out by DePree (1992) is like music “it exists and it doesn’t. It is written on the page, but it means nothing until performed and heard. Much of its effect
depends on the performer and the listener. The best leaders, like the best music, inspire us to see new possibilities.”

IV. Methods

“Qualitative research is a form of inquiry that explores phenomena in their natural settings and uses multi-methods to interpret, understand, explain, and bring meaning to them.” (Anderson, 2001)

Overview

The research focuses on three pillars from the performing arts that, most naturally, lend themselves to the development and training of leadership skills: orchestral conducting, choreography and stage directing. At first glance these areas are recognized as creative outlets and environments that nurture artistry through developing proficiency and technical skills, each within a respective art form. A more in-depth look at these arts illustrates and argues that, to some extent, their respective directorial positions also require certain leadership traits. This study exposes and examines training programs that prepare students for such professional leadership roles within the performing arts.

This project focuses on “the range of qualitative methods” (Silverman, 2006) that will include the following central methodologies:

1. The use of interviews
2. On-site observation
3. Analysis of documents, texts and electronic information resources (i.e., internet)
In collecting the data for this research, the methods of the project focused on different pedagogies and techniques that are used in leadership-training programs within music, dance and theatre. Such pedagogies, similar to those describes by Schulman as “signature pedagogies” (Schulman, 2005) are a combination of teaching methods that work to integrate knowledge and practical experience in preparation of students entering their profession as practitioners. A professional needs to have skills and attributes that go beyond his knowledge and understanding of his field. “A professional has to be prepared to act, to perform, to practice, whether they have enough information or not” (Schulman, 2005).

Through a case study of these three arts, information was collected in regards to the kinds of models used; the practices, philosophies, core courses as well as prerequisites for entering such programs; and capstone requirements needed to graduate. The gathering of data consisted of the following four main phases:

*Phase One* – interview session with leaders in higher education who have a performing arts background.

*Phase Two* – interviews with instructors of graduate leadership programs in the performing arts.

*Phase Three* – site visits and interviews with the students of the above mentions instructors currently enrolled in leadership training programs in the performing arts.

*Phase Four* – analysis of all the data as collected in the previous phases.
A representation from at least one discipline from each of the performing arts was sought for each phase, although, initially, more individuals and programs were contacted.

**Phase One**

This first phase consisted of interviews with current leaders in higher education that have come to their current positions as presidents of universities and colleges from a leadership career in the performing arts. This includes two presidents with a background from music, one with a background from dance and theatre and the fourth with a background in theatre. These interviews (see appendix 4) were “structured conversations” (Rubin; Rubin, 2005). They were based on core questions that were prepared in advance and used as the foundation for these interviews. In the course of each interview follow-up questions were asked to illuminate the ideas and other topics that were initiated and brought up by the interviewees but that still related to the study. Throughout each interview the conversation was kept on track and focused on the main theme of the research. The object was to bring forth the personal story of each interviewee as it pertains to the topic of the research, and to position it as the focal point of the interview (Glunn, 2003).

The focus of these interviews (See appendix 1) highlights the performing-arts training and education that these individuals received, along with how the skills they acquired from training and the experiences which they gained as performing artists have helped them in their current positions as leaders in education. The breadth of the sample, as with
all the phases, was focused on “authenticity rather than sample size” (Silverman, 2006) as the question of validity is often of concern in this type of research.

At first the interviews were planned with three presidents of institutes of higher education. A fourth opportunity to interview yet another college president with the desired background arose and the interview was held. Initial contact was made with these individuals regarding this project and their contribution to this phase of the study. The interviewees were selected as they all have backgrounds in the performing arts that encompass music, dance or theatre. The first interview was held with a musician who has performed in both solo and chamber performances in major venues around the country. He is the president of a performing arts conservatory in the New York metropolitan area. The second interview was held with the president of medium size, faith-based private comprehensive university in the northern central region of the United States. His performing arts background is in theatre as an actor and, most notably, as a director. The third is an accomplished orchestral conductor with a national and international reputation and the president of a liberal arts college in the northeastern region of the country. The fourth president to be interviewed is the president of a liberal arts college in the north central United States. She brings experience as both a theatre director and dance choreographer.

Most of the four continue to pursue their art form on some level while serving in their current capacity as leaders of institutes of higher education. This group of leaders heads schools that nurture and support a strong liberal arts curriculum. It is important to note
that while being somewhat different than conventional higher education institutes, the conservatory has a solid liberal arts curriculum that compliments the more vocation-oriented education that it is known for.

This first stage laid the foundation for the rest of the research. It is through these interviews that central research points of this study, such as practice vs. theory training, pedagogical techniques and processes became clearer. These assisted in focusing the research and in collecting and analyzing pertinent data in relation to the central topic of this project.

**Phase Two**

Questions addressed to instructors of such programs focused on teaching style/s (lecture, interactive presentations, lab or workshop), assessment techniques, how their course fits into the larger curricula plan, teaching philosophy as well as questions regarding the program in general. Contact was first made with the instructors within each institute and program that taught conducting, choreography or directing. The initial contact was made via electronic mail followed by the on-site or phone interview. Once three instructors agreed to participate in those interviews, on-site-school visits were arranged. This offered a good representation from each discipline with an amount of data that could be analyzed for the purpose of this study. Visits to the institutes included a visit to two of the graduate courses at which the interviewees were teaching.

All three instructors were picked for their reputations as artists and master teachers in their respective disciplines. Selecting and interviewing such highly regarded educators
was imperative to the research as their breadth of expertise and experience was a significant contribution to the study.

**Phase Three**

The third phase of the data collection process focused on on-site visits to higher education institutions that offered leadership-training programs in the performing arts. In this stage an ethnographic approach guided the research that included visits by the researcher to at least one class in each discipline. Each class was selected after an online review of the curricula of each institution’s program and in coordination with the instructor. Each of the instructors was one of the three instructors interviewed in phase two.

At this point case study methodology as a “disciplined inquiry that is concerned with illuminating meaning by using inductive processes” (Glatthorn; Joyner, 2005) was applied. Arrangements were made to interview students that were observed in these classes. These interviews (See appendix 3), pertaining to their work in the class observed as well as in the program, was included in the data collection process. The questions focused on the type of training the students were receiving, as well as inquiring into the method of the training the students were getting—i.e., could that training method be characterized as leaning a more practical and hands-on training approach or is it an additional theory-based style of learning?
This phase also consisted of observing the actual coaching of performing arts leaders (conductors, choreographers and directors). In accordance with IRB policy and the Boards’ approval as well as the consent of the students and instructor, still photos of training sequences were taken at one of the sites. Observation notes were written by hand at both the programs that were visited. Pedagogical and training methods that are used in each program and course (theoretical and/or practical) were the main focal point. The objective in using both these means of documentation was not to focus on individuals but rather on the methods, environments and techniques that are used in such programs. As the courses themselves, and the methodologies and techniques in these performing arts courses are unconventional, i.e., not in a lecture hall or conventional class room but rather taking place in a studio, rehearsal hall, or on stage, the idea of documenting through camera was mainly to help illustrate to the reader the physical structure of such courses, and highlight some of the processes and methodologies that are familiar within the performing arts but might not be familiar to persons outside this discipline. The use of this kind of documentation helped illustrate how and what precisely makes these teaching techniques unique and effective. It also helps support the central issue of practical application of skills that this study focuses on.

Only two sites visits materialized due to scheduling conflicts regarding the third on-site visit to a graduate program in orchestral conducting. The researcher pursued such a visit but at the point when all other data had already been collected, the sample of information seemed to be substantial enough to begin analysis and a decision was made to abandon the third site-visit.
Phase Four

The last phase of the study consisted of organizing all the data that was collected in the previous three phases and compiling the information from each group of interviews (the presidents, the course instructors and the students). All of the information was recorded on digital voice-recording devices as well as digital image recording devices. The information was then reviewed several times, with notes taken and summarized.

Although separated, interview groups were compared for themes that appeared in all three groups. For example, recurring methodologies as described by each of the groups from their perspective as well as across all three disciplines in the performing arts. While looking at each art individually, taking this collective, overall view of all three interview groups as well as the three different disciplines within the performing arts, highlight the existence of similar practices in these leadership-training programs. In turn, such findings bring forward original and different training methodologies to the ones currently used in other management and leadership preparation programs outside of the performing arts.

The case study approach appeared to be the most useful process for this study. As “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context” (Yin, 1989), case studies bring multiple perspectives to research. Such a variety of views and the interaction between them helped focus on the topic of the study. The use of multiple sources of data in this study helped validate and confirm the processes used.
During the entire process a review and compilation of online information, pertaining to the programs that were visited, took place. Through online searches, a leading medium that “provides new channels for researchers for conducting research” (Silverman, 2006) in the twenty-first century, additional sources for investigation (Glatthorn; Joyner, 2005) were found. The focal point of the search was to locate the programs that were visited and to gather additional information that was not visible or accessible during the on-site visits. This digital review also assisted in looking at other programs in the performing arts that offer leadership training, and compare them to those programs that on-site visits occurred. This allowed the researcher to get a clearer idea of the field as a whole and the sample the visited programs represented.

The sites and web pages were saved electronically as well as printed out in hard copy. The websites of both private and public colleges were visited. Program descriptions were reviewed in terms of their relevance to the subject of leadership. At this point, a careful analysis of each program description was done with a closer look at a program’s core courses and requirements. This was then recorded by highlighting key words and terms into four (and if necessary, more) color-coded categories. Examples include such fields as:

- **Practice**: Highlighted words and terms that point to the practical aspects a program offers.
- **Theory**: Highlighted words and terms that point to the theoretical aspects a program offers.
- **Other**: Highlighted words or “outstanding” terms and/or external bodies such as professional organizations or institutes that give a program another facet in the training it
offers. This would indicate a program’s preference of a more hands-on learning experience rather than the more classroom-based theoretical approach.

Capstone Assignment: Indicates the program’s requirements for graduation.

Questions as to what would qualify a program to be acceptable and/or valid to be included in the sample were structured and composed and helped to set the sample’s parameters. Such questions included, but were not limited to, the following:

- Does the title of a program directly address the subject of leadership?
- Does the program have a mission statement, and if so does the mission statement make any reference to the subject of leadership and/or leadership training?
- Does the program include and/or specify courses that include the word “leadership” and/or courses that could be affiliated with leadership training?
- Does the program’s philosophy align itself with the topic of leadership training?

Initially the search focused on at least three institutes of higher education in New York State. All these institutes are schools that offer graduate-level training programs (i.e., master of fine arts degrees) in the performing arts; in orchestral conducting, choreography and/or theatre directing.
Regardless of how many leadership programs an institute offers, the research looked to collect similarities in such programs regardless of whether all were found in one school or if they were scattered between a number of schools. For the project to provide a varied sample, which well represents each of the three arts previously articulated, the goal of the search was to collect data in each of the phases from at least one of the three disciplines.

V. Results and Findings

“Educational leaders must possess the capacity to manage change and to create collaborative action.” (NPBEA, 2002)

As described in the previous chapter, the information for this project was collected in three phases: interviews, site visits and online research. Together these components give a comprehensive perspective that covers the important and relevant elements regarding leadership-training programs within the performing arts. This information pertains to research that looks at leadership-training programs within the performing arts and illuminates how such programs might contribute to leadership programs in other disciplines.

Site selection focused on a dozen different institutes that offered graduate degrees in the areas of orchestral conducting, choreography and theatrical directing. The investigation into each institute and program looked to study connections such courses might have to the core topic of this research in terms of leadership. Two out of the original 12 institutes
that were selected replied and invited the researcher for an on-site visit; attend a class in one of the disciplines (choreography or theatre directing) and to conduct interviews with both the instructors and the graduate students enrolled in the courses. An interview with a third instructor at a different institute was also conducted. Interviews with four college presidents who have a performing arts background were conducted as the first phase of this investigation, preceding the site visits.

**Interviews with University Presidents**

*Phase One* focused on interviews with leaders in higher education who have a performing arts background. Interviews began with some general questions and continued with more specific questions in regards to leadership and the performing arts (see appendix 1). Two interviews were conducted in person and the other two were done by phone. All four interviews were recorded (see appendix 4).

The interviews focused on four main topics:

a) Each president and his or her background and what led that individual to their current position.

b) Their training as performing artists and how they have applied that experience to their current posts.

c) The strengths and weaknesses they find in education leadership and performing-arts leadership.

d) Their recommendations concerning what can be done to improve training in performing arts leadership programs as well as in other leadership programs.
All four presidents said they find gratification in being in a position where they can create opportunities for others to shine, build teams to work as an ensemble, and create an environment where they can work in collaboration with faculty, staff and students towards a common goal. Mark Heckler, president of Valparaiso University in Indiana, a medium-size, faith-based private comprehensive university, stated that one of the things that excited as a theatre director and stimulates him in his current position as the university’s president, is the opportunity to find a way to “unlock and motivate others as a group” (Heckler, 2008) while bringing people together to work towards a “common purpose.” Ensemble work and a team-like environment is also one of the points made by Leon Botstein, the president of Bard College, a private liberal arts college in New York State. An accomplished and sought-after conductor with both national and international credits, Botstein states that, like working with an orchestra, he enjoys the “ensemble work” that it takes to run his college. He enjoys the ability to lead a “highly talented, intelligent, fierce group of people” (Botstein, 2008), comprised of both faculty and students.

A strong leader does not take all the credit but “others to shine.” Working with people, for others and “serving the community of the institute” is what motivates Joseph Polisi, the president of The Juilliard School, the acclaimed performing arts conservatory in New York City. Polisi also shares Botstein’s enthusiasm for serving and working with a group of esteemed faculty, dedicated staff and a highly talented student body. Stepping back and letting others have the spotlight, “enabling others and creating opportunities for
others to flourish in” (Polisi, 2008), gives Polisi and even greater satisfaction than performing.

The ensemble work and the collaborative experience these presidents gained during their performing-arts training and professional experience as artists is central to the way in which they handle their current positions. Articulating this position, Heckler (2008) states: “I exercise theatrical direction techniques every day in my current position.” Using techniques learned while training as artists, leaders such as Heckler constantly pursue successful collaboration and find ways to make people work together in concert. For example, with her background as a theatre director and choreographer, Jill Beck, president of Lawrence University, a private liberal arts college in Appleton, Wisconsin, states that like a director of any theatrical production, a president builds a team that comprises various points of view and it is up to the director to “assimilate it all and bring it into a compelling vision that everyone can buy into” (Beck, 2008).

Practical experience as artists and as educators that have worked their way up through the system has given these four leaders a clear understanding, and appreciation of the work done in their organizations. Such experience makes each empathetic to his or her work with faculty, students and fellow administrators (Polisi, 2008). It is to their advantage that they have been performing arts students, come up through the ranks as faculty and instructors. Being a “citizen’s soldier” brings the experience to being an artist to their current position as leaders (Botstein, 2008).
There are other skills they have acquired through performing-arts training that have become relevant and useful to these leaders. Adhering to deadlines, working within a budget, effective and persuasive public speaking, sheer physical stamina and the ability to multitask have all come into play for these artists in their current positions as presidents of institutes of higher education. Botstein (2008) adds that, as president, like a conductor, one needs to be a good listener and have the ability to understand the aspirations of others and guide them towards a common goal. Coming from the performing arts, which rely heavily on philanthropy in order to survive, these presidents bring valuable experience to their position in regards to grant application, proposals, fund-raising and donor relations, as well as interaction with foundations. Such skills are integral for survival in the performing arts, as well as in higher education (Beck, 2008).

All of the interviewees agree that performing artists acquire such skills by applying them to their practical work (Beck et al, 2008). As a directing student and a professional, a director constantly “imagines and constructs new worlds and tests the feasibility and desirability of these worlds with an audience” (Heckler, 2008). It is all “rooted in the experience” (Polisi, 2008). As a conducting teacher, Botstein asserts that one cannot apply any of the performing-arts leadership skills without actually “doing it.” In the performing arts, one can only gain experience by standing in front of an orchestra, or in front of a cast of actors or dancers. “Conducting is a technique but yet it is really impossible to really learn how to do except by doing it” (Botstein, 2008). The only way to learn, states Heckler, is to execute. He feels leadership programs need to be more “clinical” and less “classroom oriented.” He emphasizes that the “real learning” is when
students are directing in the studio or on stage, not while directing students are in a classroom reading or listening to lectures.

Yet, the focus of performing-arts leadership-training programs is mainly on developing the craft, i.e., the art of conducting, choreography or directing. Performing-arts curricula should be much more intentional in building leadership skills and should have classes that bring out the application of what performing artists are learning. The leadership skills acquired in performing-arts training go “under the radar” (Beck, 2008). The artistic and technical skills are stressed and the emphasis, especially in dance and choreography, evolves around the acquisition of nonverbal skills. Performing artist need to be put in more social environments where they have to interact and speak about their craft. Social discourse and interaction would help inform directors and give them a better understanding of what is happening socially when working within a creative process (Heckler, 2008). Conductors, choreographers and directors need to have a “lager vision of the universe and the society they’re working in” (Polisi, 2008). They need to be open to new ideas, and immerse themselves in many of cultures in order to better understand them. They cannot only be concerned with the technical aspect of their craft. As leaders they will need to have a much broader perspective and understanding of their institute and its culture (Botstein et al, 2008).

There is an advantage in coming out of the performing arts that is underestimated. Creative thinking, imagination, the ability to escape past practices, intuition and visualization are imbedded in the training that performing arts leaders receive but are
lacking in other leadership programs (Beck; Heckler). Leadership programs in higher education focus primarily on the changing nature of higher education through the theory and concept of a leader-and-follower relationship. “There is not a leadership program that is going to teach you all the pressures of this job” (Heckler, 2008). In the performing arts, leadership is acquired within a social context, in public and not within the walls of a classroom. “You learn and make your mistake in public, and you learn the art in public.” (Botstein, 2008). Whereas, for example, in higher education you learn about leadership through case studies that teach you little about listening and inspiring others. Leadership-training programs in higher education could benefit by taking case studies out of the classroom and into the studio. “Such programs fall far short of what it is that leaders need to do their jobs” (Heckler, 2008). In this regard, Beck (2008) points out that “the level of imagination and creative thinking that is prevalent among the nation’s presidents does not particularly impress me.”

Performing artists are in a bit of a “prejudicial climate” in competing for leadership positions. Because there are not many artists who are indeed leaders, this is assumed to be indicative of the capacities of performing artists to lead outside their field. “It is up to us in the performing arts to communicate the leadership potential that our arts hold” (Beck, 2008). There is room for leadership-training programs, in all disciplines. Exploring the human dimension, of how to work with people effectively, is what is lacking. A lot of young performing artists do not venture out of their day-to-day activity of training and rehearsing to realize their potential as administrators. To many, administration looks very dull and repetitive. In reality, this is not the case; leading
people to do things differently takes open-mindedness and “can be unbelievably creative” (Beck, 2008).

All four presidents expressed a passion to help and motivate others. These artists turned administrators are interested in “building real worlds, not imaginative ones” (Heckler, 2008). As artists they are practitioners, not theorists, and as such they make things happen (Polisi, 2008). These artists are administrators who are creatively motivated. “If more leaders would see leadership through such a creative lens, it would benefit all concerned” (Beck, 2008).

**Interviews with Instructors**

*Phase Two* included interviews with instructors of graduate (i.e., M.F.A.) courses in the performing arts. These included interviews with senior faculty whose area of specialization is in orchestral conducting, choreography and directing. The interviews were conducted by phone and recorded with the permission of the interviewees. Beginning with general questions concerning the specific subject, the interviews then moved into more specific questions pertaining to a given field of study (i.e., orchestral conducting, dance or theatre), training methodologies and the subject of leadership as it relates to the performing-arts skills that they teach.

The interviews focused on the following topics:

a) What qualities and skills do instructors look for in perspective students?

b) What skills are taught in the course?
c) How are students assessed regarding progress and accomplishments in the course?

d) How, if at all, does the course and training relate to the subject of leadership?

The interviewees elaborated their responses to some questions and answered, in a brief sentence or two, other questions. As with the presidents’ interviews, some questions were comprehensive and some responses covered several questions at once.

All three interviewees spoke of their art as a means to learn, explore and investigate. For Anne Bogart, a leading instructor in the M.F.A. directing program at Columbia University in New York City, theatre directing is “a never ending study.” By teaching their art to others, they gain a deeper insight into what it is they do as artists. For all three instructors art is about communicating with others.

These instructors, regardless of their area of expertise, said they were not imposing their own personal style on their students but rather, training them to understand that the craft has to evolve over time and is not a set menu. For all three instructors, teaching is about the students finding their own voices. The Juilliard School’s James DePreist, head orchestral-conducting instructor and a leading conductor in his own right, states that teaching conducting is not about “imposing your own style on them,” (DePreist, 2008) but about guiding the students to explore a variety of possibilities and interpretations. “Each great conductor has his or her own style” (DePreist, 2008) and so the students have to find their own method.
Sara Rudner, chair of dance at Sarah Lawrence College, a private liberal-arts college with a prominent graduate training program in choreography, concurs. Rudner states that choreography is done differently by different people and that there are various ways to create a dance, therefore no one style can be taught as there is no one style of choreography. Students need to learn by “being open to changes that might occur within the process and letting accidents evolve” (Rudner, 2008). Through such an evolving process, the students find their own working style and creative processes. Students need to find their own style and not try to “adopt an attitude or posture” of another conductor, choreographer or director; “you have to be yourself” (DePriest, 2008).

In regard to student skill acquisition and growth within their programs, all three instructors focused on similar points. Successful skills acquisition includes: being flexible and having the ability to adapt to change, being a good listener and observer, and being able to communicate clearly with others. At Columbia the emphasis is on how the students communicate and interact with others and less about the content of what they are saying. At Sarah Lawrence the focus of the course “is not just about teaching the steps, but about getting the quality and the overall picture of the choreography” (Rudner, 2008). The emphasis in the curriculum is about “how to communicate such information;” how the choreographer expresses him or herself to the dancers in a manner and way that he or she gets the results they want.

Theatre directing is “mainly about juggling psychology and ideas” (Bogart, 2008) and being able to adapt to change when needed. This is true in all three disciplines; one is constantly monitoring a situation (e.g., a music phrase, a dance phrase or a scene) and
how it is executed and performed. DePreist (2008) adds that, “a conductor is constantly monitoring and performing.” As the conductor steps up on the podium, he or she gives immediate feedback to the group and receives an immediate response back from the group. “Once you begin conducting, the orchestra makes a corporate decision within the first few moments if to play and follow that person or not.” There is a “real-time” response and learning experience that is unique in these courses.

Selection of prospective students into each of the programs is similar. All three instructors mentioned that the interview session that is part of the audition process is the most revealing. “We look for an engaged lively mind; a mind that is working, that is in motion” (Rudner, 2008). What all three instructors look for in prospective students is the person behind the technique. They are interested to see the individual beyond their technical abilities. This is done by reviewing applicants’ work that has been done prior to entering the program (i.e., videos of recorded dances they have choreographed, plays that they have directed or ensembles they have conducted). “I’m not interested in what they have to say but how they say it and how they interact and communicate with others. That is what is relevant for me,” explains Bogart (2008) about auditioning students to the program. The few who are invited for interviews are screened for “what their real intentions are and how they feel about music making” (DePreist, 2008).

Ultimately the ability to lead an orchestra, dance ensemble or cast of actors is a skill that one cannot teach. It is “inexplicable.” It is about a chemistry that works or doesn’t. “This chemistry cannot be taught, no matter how technically proficient the conductor is” (DePreist, 2008). According to Bogart (2008), “there is no mastering of the craft… you
have it or you don’t.” The students have to “figure out the how” (Rudner, 2008): how to interact with your ensemble, cast or orchestra, how to get them to do what you want while still treating them with respect. This is done by trying different methods, problem solving, observation and the direct interaction with the musicians, dancers or actors. In each of the disciplines this is done within the studio, the learning venue (see Image V.1) that is the experimental laboratory where performing-art students try different approaches and solutions and where the instructors guide, give suggestions, and give immediate feedback to the students. DePriest (2008) gives “a series of possibilities that the students might not have perhaps entertained.”

The students have to find and explore those skills from the process, the actual work and engagement in the action. This is not within the curricula but it is directly affected, shaped by and a product of the curriculum. “They have to deal with problems as they
“There is no set formula to get this done. There is no one way, one technique. Whatever you use, it needs to work” (DePriest, 2008).

In terms of completing the course the students in all three disciplines are engaged in experiential work throughout the program. At Sarah Lawrence they need to “do the work” (Rudner, 2008), physically working with dancers and creating dances (see Image V.2).

Image V.2: Sarah Lawrence graduate students working on choreography during Graduate Seminar course. Sarah Lawrence College, 2008.

They present their work, (i.e., a dance) four times a semester and get feedback from their peers and instructor. During the course of the program they have to choreograph at least a group piece as well as a solo dance that they have to perform. By the end of the program the students have to produce a whole dance concert of their work as well as an oral defense and analysis of their performance project in the form of a lecture demonstration for the faculty (Sarah Lawrence, 2008).
The directing students have similar assignments that gradually move them into the realm of the professional arena. At Columbia’s graduate theatre-directing program, students begin by directing one act or scene from a larger play. They are asked to present their work throughout the year. They are responsible for gathering their cast and rehearsing the work. The instructor sees the final product. During the second year they direct four major productions. In their third and final year, students work on one major production and intern on two professionals productions, “building their bridge and forging the students into the profession” (Bogart, 2008). Throughout the program they work with a variety of cast sizes, ranging from two to 30, and also direct a single actor in a one-performer show.

All three programs are similar in terms of the teaching venues. These courses are held in a studio or a rehearsal space. At Juilliard, where the conducting students work with the larger musical ensembles under the direction of DePreist, this is done in the main orchestral rehearsal room. Two such courses facilitate this aspect of the program: the conductor’s lab orchestra and a course titled conductor’s forum. During the lab, students study standard orchestral literature through conducting ensembles and rehearse them for a public performance. The forum is designed to help students prepare for the “joys and pitfalls of the professional life. Through discussion with individuals who serve the business of conducting, class members gain insight into their future roles as musicians, community leaders, and spokespersons for the arts” (Juilliard, 2008).
At Sarah Lawrence the graduate students in choreography meet biweekly in a course called graduate seminar that takes place in one of the main dance studios (see *Image V.3*) Rudner (2008) calls this a “physical discussion in choreography.”

*Image V.3: Graduate Choreography Seminar. Sarah Lawrence College, 2008.*

There the students bring examples of what they are currently working on and together with their fellow classmates, they work on solving problems that arise during rehearsals with their own dancers (see *Image V.4*).

*Image V.4: SLC Students observing video of a rehearsal with dancers. Sarah Lawrence College, 2008.*

At the graduate directing program at Columbia, the learning environment is similar to the environment found in the other two programs. The class meets in a studio where the students present and discuss their work. Together with their instructor, they confront problems they have faced during rehearsals and try to find a variety of solutions by
working through these challenges with their peers. The program is project-oriented and is based on the idea that “one’s vision as a director is developed through practice, encouragement, critical feedback, collaboration and more practice” (Columbia, 2008).

Responding to the question whether arts disciplines (i.e., conducting, choreography and directing) also build leadership skills, similar responses came from all three instructors. For Bogart (2008) it is just that: “A director is a leader. It’s that simple.” Like leaders, directors need to be “inquisitive and have the ‘want’ to explore, investigate” and change. For Rudner the choreographer as leader is “the organizer, the teacher, the creative instigator.” The choreographer takes on the responsibility of wanting to make a dance, of having the vision and making it materialize. As leaders they have to make choices, be creative in problem solving, be “open to changes that might occur with the [creative] process” (Rudner, 2008). All three instructors spoke of the ability to observe others as an important skill for these students to master in their pursuit of their craft and art. Rudner calls this “indirect learning;” learning by stepping away from the center and taking a look from the outside in. Bogart echoes this idea and states that directing is about “listening closely and responding to what you hear.” DePreist acknowledges this in a similar statement, saying that learning to conduct is about observing and listening.

Other statements made in response to the final question varied. DePreist (2008) added that a conductor is “absolutely” a leader and that leading an orchestra is a “collective act.” The conductor needs to give the impression that he or she is “not doing it, but that they are all doing it together.” The need to be imaginative as a conductor, choreographer or director is a vital tool and is constantly used in all three art forms. For example, the
conductor could use imagery to communicate with a musician who is called upon to produce a “far-away sound.” The conductor would bring an example of looking down the wrong end of a telescope to make his or her point clear to a musician (DePreist, 2008).

Directors need to find similar ways to be clear in their work with actors and in so doing they need to work on their communication skills as well as on their social ones. Both are learned through the doing of the work. All the interviewees stated that it is the social skills that cannot be taught. The only way for students to acquire them is through the experience of hands-on work. This acquisition can be achieved through studio work, such as leading a group through a creative process as conducting an orchestra, choreographing a dance with a group of dancers or directing a cast of actors.

**Site visits**

The researcher made site visits to a number of graduate programs in the performing arts. The visits were intended to get a closer look and understanding about how the training and preparation of actual students took place. The venues were all similar. Classes were held in a studio or a performance space. During the class, students were engaged in, rehearsed and worked within their medium. The classes were interactive and open to discussion between instructor and students. Class sizes were small with approximately six students in each class (See Figure 1-4: *Example of Performing Arts Curriculum* p.72-74).
The class for the graduate directing students focused on a final showing of a directing assignment that the students were working on for the previous two weeks. Each directing student presented the same scene. The student directors chose their cast of actors from outside of the class. Each of the presentations was performed in full costume but with minimal theatrical lighting and scenic elements. Although the scene was the same in each of the presentations, each director presented a very different take. Some chose to use music elements, different scenic set-ups as well as speech accents and period styles. In general, the given physical circumstances (i.e., the performance space and technical capabilities) challenged the directors to make specific choices and come up with creative solutions in presenting the assignment. There was an immediate feedback process. After each presentation the instructor made some general comments relating to the scene that was performed. Further discussion of each staging and an in-depth analysis of it would take place during the second class meeting that week.

The researcher also visited a graduate class in choreography. The class of six MFA students at Sarah Lawrence College focused on an assignment that the students had been working on for the previous few weeks. The class met in a dance studio. The “Choreographic Lab” (SLC, 2008) brought the graduate students together as a group where they meet with the instructor of the course. Students sat on the floor, gathered around the instructor, ready to discuss and exchange ideas and experiences from their rehearsal work with their individual groups of dancers conducted outside of this class.
The two-hour class began with some discussion in the group about the assignment and the general progress each student was making in his or her rehearsal. It continued with a more in-depth report by each of the students as to the status of their rehearsal process and how things were progressing. At that point, the instructor chose one student who brought up a problem she faced in her last rehearsal. The problem centered on communication between the choreographer and the dancers. The student was finding it hard to communicate a specific choreographic idea and concept to her dancers. The instructor then asked the student to try it on her peers, who acted as her dancers. She gave directions and the dancers responded. There was an immediate feedback process going on. There was a constant “bouncing off of ideas” that took place between all who were a part of the class (instructor and students) and everyone offered feedback; it was all immediate and “live.” The problem was then physically resolved with the other students simulating the group of dancers the choreographer works with. This continued for a while and was repeated several times. As the student choreographer directed her peers to try different ways of executing certain moves, the instructor made the student choreographer aware of how she was using her dancers and what she was asking them to do (i.e., how many times is she asked them to repeat the same movement phrase, her use of imagery, the quality and clarity of direction that she used in transmitting her directions).

After several attempts to communicate verbally with the dancers, the instructor suggested that the choreographer become directly involved in the action, “being a part of the action” rather than using a “long distance” directing technique. If directing from the “outside”
did not work, there is a need for the choreographer to physically demonstrate what she is asking of her dancers (Rudner, 2008).

The class continued to address choreographic-related problems that other students brought up from their rehearsals. In a similar way, two more students worked through the assignment within an environment of open dialogue and immediate feedback from their instructor and peers. The process was not over by the end of the class period. Specific answers and solutions were not necessarily agreed upon. Instead, the students took away several options and ideas of how to confront the problem at their next rehearsal.

An example of the curricula at Sarah Lawrence College can be seen on the following pages (Figures 1-4). This example, although a representation of one program, provides an overall perspective of the graduate training program at this specific institute. It embodies the character of the program as discussed by both the instructor and students. The program is focused on core requirements that include three stages of the graduate seminar course (see Figure 1). Each seminar looks at dance and choreography through a different lens: the first is a rudimentary perspective, the second, a wider one that looks at the creative process within the arts and how choreography is a part of it; the third is more individually focused and deals with the technical aspects of dance and movement. All three culminate with a presentation of a full-fledged dance concert, which serves as the capstone requirement of the course.
Figure 2 shows the two dance and movement courses that are electives, which are more theory-based courses. Figures 3 and 4 represent courses that focus on choreographic techniques and the creative processes necessary in learning the craft of dance-making. Figure 3 illustrates courses that are lab-like exploration classes, dealing directly with choreographic skill acquisition. Figure 4 shows electives that focus on dance and movement techniques. These courses are physical and train choreographers in various movement techniques and styles. These electives are necessary tools for choreographers as they explore and develop movement vocabulary for creating dances.

Although specific of one particular program, the curriculum at Sarah Lawrence College does represent the basic menu of courses one can find in most graduate programs which offer an MFA in choreography. It should be noted that other programs, like the one at SLC, add their individual courses to core courses. By doing this these programs present a unique aspect of their offerings (i.e., choreography and video, choreography and dance notation, choreography and dance therapy).
Example of Performing Arts Curriculum (SLC, 2008)

FIGURE 1: Master of Fine Arts (Dance) Program Requirements

**Program Credit Distribution:**
36 course credits:
24 in the first year
12 in the second year
(This refers to all full-time students)

**Required courses**

**Graduate Seminar I:**
This seminar encourages students to learn about the world of dance by conducting research and by analyzing and writing about aspects of dance that interest them.

**Graduate Seminar II:**
This seminar is designed to encourage students to make connections between dance, theatre, music, writing, and the visual arts, and to make them aware of and conversant with the creative process always at work in the world. Choreographic projects from the Dance Making class will be presented and discussed.

**Graduate Seminar III:**
This seminar emphasizes a dynamic foundation for dancing, offering participants an opportunity to refine their technique and analytical skills. Relevant aspects of functional anatomy are presented and considered throughout the class. Students are encouraged and coached to increase awareness of their current strategies as well as to broaden their range of movement possibilities.

**Capstone Requirement:**
A Master’s Performance Project is to be completed in the second year. Students will also prepare an oral defense and analysis of their Performance Project in the form of a lecture demonstration for the faculty.

FIGURE 2: Class/Lecture Electives:

**Dance and Movement Topics**

**Dance History**
This is a course in the history of performance in the United States from the early 20th century to the present as exemplified by the dancers, choreographers, and teachers who brought about notable changes in the art. The relationship of dance to the larger cultural environment is discussed, with emphasis placed on the dance of our time. This course is designed to help the student relate his or her own work to the development of the art and to encourage creative critical perception.

**Dance/Movement Therapy: Fundamentals**
In this process-oriented course, we will study the theory and practice of dance/movement therapy. Through experiential and collaborative learning, we will examine the historical, developmental, cultural, and clinical aspects of dance’s ability to heal and promote change. Students will also explore their own relationships to dance from the perspectives of personal growth and social action.
FIGURE 3: Studio Learning Electives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movement Study Labs</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practical-based / Technical training</td>
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**Composition A, B**
These components explore the expressive and communicative possibilities of movement by introducing different strategies for making dances. Students are asked to create and perform studies, direct one another, and share and discuss ideas and solutions with peers.

**Dance Making**
Students and faculty meet weekly to view individual choreographic projects and discuss relevant artistic and practical problems.

**Dance and Tech/Media**
This class runs as a laboratory, mixing dance and computing. Students experiment with designing interactive multimedia systems using Max/MSP/Jitter. These dance machines provide new compositional approaches and forms for generating and disseminating dance. They can also serve as dynamic environments for digitally mediated live performances. Class readings help place the work within a broader cultural context.

**Labanotation/Repertory**
Through Rudolph Laban’s system of movement notation, students concentrate on correct observation and analysis of movement, writing facility, and the ability to read and perform authentic historical dance forms.

**Teaching Conference**
Detailed study of kinesthetic, verbal, and creative factors in varied teaching situations are presented and analyzed in terms of teaching objectives. Students are placed as practice teachers, under supervision, in dance classes on campus and in community schools.

**Lighting Design and Stagecraft for Dance**
Students examine the theoretical and practical aspects of designing lights for dance. Students in this class create original lighting designs for dance program concerts.

**Music for Dancers**
Students will expand their knowledge of musical elements, terminology, and procedures, and learn the basics of rhythmic notation. They will also learn how to scan musical scores with various degrees of complexity and explore the diverse rhythmic styles that have developed in response to different geographical, social, and philosophical conditions. This course will provide students with the opportunity to play percussion instruments.
FIGURE 4: Studio Learning Electives

### Dance and Movement Styles
#### Practical-based / Technical training

**Modern and Postmodern Dance**
This course focuses on the study of dynamic alignment through coordination and integration of the neuro/skeletal/muscular system in order to gain strength, balance, spatial, and rhythmic awareness.

**Ballet**
Ballet studies guide students in creative and expressive freedom by enhancing qualities of ease, grace, and symmetry that define the form.

**Improvisation and Contact Improvisation**
Internal and external perceptions are honed while looking at movement from many points of view, as an individual or in partnership with others. This invaluable creative mode helps the student recognize, embody, and develop sensations and ideas in motion. The course enhances sensory awareness, with an emphasis on action and physical risk-taking and contemporary partnering skills.

**T'ai Chi Ch’uan**
This class focuses on the Chinese-based system for health, stress reduction, meditation in movement, and non-aggressive self-defense.

**Yoga**
Through this movement technique of union of spirit, mind, and body through practices that include breathing techniques, vocalizations, and postures (asanas).

**Feldenkrais**
Moshe Feldenkrais’ system of somatic education develops awareness, flexibility, and coordination as students are verbally guided through precisely structured movement explorations.

**FreeStyle**
Taking inspiration from both Old School and New School Hip Hop, this class merges the two styles.

**African Dance**
In this class, students explore the fundamental aesthetic of African dance. Emphasis is on rhythm as a tool to internalize the intricacies of African polyrhythm.

**Argentinean Tango**
This course helps the student acquire a tango vocabulary of movement and the leading and following techniques in a close embrace.

**Flamenco Dance**
As an expression of individuality and of culture, this course provides an in-depth introduction to the pulsing rhythms, languid arm movements, and powerful footwork of flamenco dance.
Interviews with Students

Phase Three included interviews with graduate student show are currently enrolled in courses of conducting, choreography and directing. In some instances the interview occurred right after the class that the researcher observed. Other interviews took place over the phone a few days after the class observation and site visit. As with the other previous phases, these interviews also began with general questions relating to the craft. As the interviews went on, the subject and questions moved into the area of leadership and leadership-skill acquisition.

For a number of students, regardless of their art form, the main draw of the course was the element of collaboration offered. “I choose to make stories into a dance and in the process I collaborate with others” (SLC student, 2008). “I am drawn to directing as I’m interested in the role of leadership within a collaborative art form” (Columbia student, 2008). These students spoke about the collaborative way their art (i.e., conducting, choreography or directing) brings together different elements, such as music, painting, scenery, writing and research. It is through their art that they make those connections work towards a common goal to create something new. “I like to bring things together to make them work” (Columbia student, 2008). These students are interested in creating and in making things happen.

Another reason given as to why these students chose to take these courses is their interest in being a part of a community. As characterized by one SLC student, a community
works together towards a common goal, creating with and for people whom “I like to work with and be with.”

In all the programs, students made a point about the amount of creative freedom that they are allotted by the faculty and within the curriculum. Across the board all interviewees mentioned that their programs are appealing because there is no “cookie cutter” product that each program tries to mold them into. The faculty is constantly giving feedback and comments “they don’t want us to make work that they like or enjoy. They [our instructors] want us to make work that we are satisfied with through the process and end product” (SLC student, 2008). The character of the program and the training methodologies used by their instructors do not define the type of conductor, choreographer or director that these students will become by the end of the course. The programs are a laboratory, “they are a sort of environment. We have the freedom of how and which direction we would like to pursue within this medium” (SLC student, 2008). “You are doing the work, trying and failing and constantly trying other ways to solve problems” (Columbia student, 2008). “We are not forced to take on the instructor’s choices and are free to question them [the instructors]. It gives us independence as artists to create” (SLC student, 2008).

The students highlighted the amount of work that is required of them in these courses. They are constantly directing or choreographing; “we are constantly doing the work” (Columbia student, 2008). The Columbia students jokingly agreed that, at times, their program could be defined as a “directing boot camp.” The students get feedback and
immediate assessment by the instructors who are watching their work constantly. The programs do include theory courses that focus on other aspects of each art form. The students in all programs are required to take such complementing courses as anatomy and dance history within the choreography course, dramatic literature within the directing course or music literature for the conductors. The students stated that taking a variety of courses outside of learning the tools of the craft in the studio helps them get a better understanding and grasp of who they are as conductors, choreographers or directors. “It gives us a variety of ways of looking at theatre” (Columbia student, 2008). Taking these other courses “helps us understand what it is we’re doing. It helps us understand the creative process that we’re in” (SLC student, 2008). Theory is applied. “We see theory in a very practical way. We put it into action, bringing what we learn in various classes into our work [dances] and how that information defines and influences our work” (SLC student, 2008).

When asked how they are taught the skills they need as leaders, the unanimous answer was that they acquire such skills through the experiential nature of the program. It naturally teaches them how to do things. “We are constantly surrounded by people who are giving us feedback regarding our [practical] work” (SLC student, 2008). “It actually happens from practicing, constantly doing. You hone your skills as you go along. We are offered a whole bunch of tools. It’s up to us [as directors] to figure out the way and style in which we want to use these tools to direct” (Columbia student, 2008).
The skills that were most addressed by the students were those focused on learning how to communicate clearly and efficiently with others. “How do we as choreographers make our intentions clear?” (SLC student, 2008). Taking responsibility for others and one’s own actions was another skill that all students felt was important. In all the programs, students suggested that, as leaders, they bring a group of people together and in so doing they are responsible for the group, its functionality and the creation and ultimate outcome of the work. “You bring people together and set a good example. You do your work and others will take you seriously” (Columbia student, 2008). “I learn how to interact with my dancers in the most efficient and productive way and [I] take responsibility for the process we initiate” (SLC student, 2008). The nature of their craft is to create, and in so doing they, as leaders, need to learn how to nurture an environment that supports creativity. “The choreographer has the vision and in order to achieve and make it happen you have to direct and collaborate” (SLC student, 2008). As leaders, conductors, choreographers and directors they are responsible for establishing an atmosphere in the room in which people feel comfortable to work. “We learn how to establish an environment in which people can create” (Columbia student, 2008). Establishing leadership roles is a direct reflection of the nature of these programs; they give the students the freedom to create and explore within the framework of the curriculum and constraints of each program.

Other skills the students mentioned, in regards to course teachings that directly related to leadership, included time management, working under pressure, working under a specific timeline or schedule, learning how to observe and how to listen to others. When asked if
such skills are directly addressed in the course, the answer was no and that it is “an expectation that you have when you come to this program” (Columbia student, 2008). This was also the answer to the question if any social-skill acquisition is included in the program. The answer was that this was not directly addressed in the course but that if there is a problem, students can bring it up in class and it will be addressed. In these programs and for these students, learning social norms and behaviors as leaders comes with the doing of the work. “We don’t have a leadership class, it actually happens from practicing, doing” (Columbia student).

At the conclusion of the interviews the students were asked what (if anything) the course and program was lacking. In all instances the answers revolved around the lack of time and the ability to step out of the studio or rehearsal hall to take an outside perspective of their work. The students were looking for an opportunity to express themselves other than through their medium (i.e., conducting, choreography or directing). “The one thing that we could use more of is actually speaking about our dances. Writing could be used more. Putting down in words who we are, as artists, and what it is we would like to create” (SLC student, 2008). They addressed their desire for a course in which they were given the opportunity to discuss their role and place as artists and their creative work within the larger context of the community and society. They mentioned that such an opportunity would allow them to get a clearer understanding of their work and who they are as artists, and ultimately allow them to grow and mature as conductors, choreographers or directors.
Summary

Looking at all three phases of this research, it becomes apparent that similarities exist throughout all stages. There is a common thread that connects a performing-arts leader from his or her practical training as a student, through the methodologies and teaching philosophy of his or her instructor, to the point when they become professional and, in the case of this research, continues and takes on the position of a leader in an institute of higher education. The immersion in practical practice and the constant “working” in the craft is a trait that is embedded in the students and one that almost naturally gives them the experience to grow and develop as artists and leaders. Working with and guiding others, taking responsibility for a group, collaborating and creating together, draws all these individuals, both students and administrators, to do a job that they are truly passionate about.
VI. Discussion

“It is up to the director to assimilate it all and bring it into a compelling vision that everyone can buy into.” (Beck, 2008)

As the concluding part of this dissertation, this chapter presents the reader with an overall picture of the research, restating the research problem and giving a brief review of the major methods used in the study. The final and main sections of this chapter summarize the results and discuss their implications.

Statement of the Problem

As stated in Chapter II, the case study presented here focuses on performing arts leadership-training programs as found in higher education. A strong leader—one that is trusted, effective and visionary—is always in demand. The field of leadership is constantly in search of new and effective training methodologies, and incorporating experiential approaches to leadership training is an approach that is widely entertained. Through a qualitative lens, by means of interviews and site visits, the research looked at the methodologies and curricula used in programs that train artists (such as orchestral conductors, chorographers and theatre directors), and how such training prepares them for leadership positions and could possibly benefit other leadership-training programs.

Review of the methodology

The study was based mainly on interviews and site visits. The researcher interviewed four universities presidents that have a leadership background in the performing arts. All
four presidents were asked an identical set of questions. Interviews were then conducted with instructors of programs that train leaders in the performing arts. All three instructors are directors of graduate programs and are distinguished artists in their own right. Each instructor specializes in orchestral conducting, choreography or theatre directing. At the conclusion of these interviews the researcher was invited to sit in on graduate classes that each of these instructors taught. These classes were held at two different institutions. One of the classes focused on directing and the other on choreography. At the conclusion of each class the researcher held a group interview with the graduate students. Some interviews were held on-location, while others were done by phone at a later date. Finally, a review was done of online data regarding the curricula, programs and schools that were visited as well as other programs around the country.

**Summary of the Results**

The study focused specifically on the experiential facet of leadership-training programs in the performing arts. Throughout the interviews, as well as during the site visits and class observations, it was apparent that the training and methodologies revolved around the learning of skills through the “doing” rather than by a theoretical approach. Throughout the interviews and during all three phases of the study, most interviewees highlighted the need to work in a collaborative environment, one that works towards a common purpose, an agreeable goal. The underlying perception was that this is done through strong communicative skills that include listening, clear directions and a desire to adjust to change as well as bring about change.

The presidents reflected on the following:
• Their main reasons in pursuing a leadership position in higher education.
• Their past training and how it comes into play in their current positions.
• Leadership training in general and the weaknesses and strengths of leadership-training programs in the performing arts.
• Improvement that can be made within leadership programs in the performing arts as well as other disciplines and what needs to be done in the future relative to these goals.

The instructors touched on the following topics:
• The qualities they look for in a prospective student who is applying to their program and his or her potential to succeed in the program.
• The skills that are or are not taught in the program and the effect this might have on a student’s ability to navigate a leadership role.
• The relationship (or its lack) of the course and materials to the topic of leadership.

The students addressed the following:
• The reasons for taking a specific course and what they expected to get out of it.
• The unique aspects of the program in which they were enrolled.
• What they have learned from the program.
• Their thoughts on the topic of leadership, how (if at all) it connects to their art and how they see themselves as leaders.

There seemed to be a connection between all interviewees and their answers, in their referencing same essential points. The presidents covered the most ground and were more encompassing in their answers overall. They spoke in terms of leadership, not just
from their current perspectives as administrative leaders of institutions of higher education, but as an art form in which they were trained as artists. The instructors were more specific and focused on the way they taught courses. Their angle on the research topic shed light on the practical aspects of leadership training in the performing arts and how one it teaches that. The students referred to the details of the process they undergo within leadership-training programs and how it teaches them about their craft. All interviewees largely agree on basic core principles in leadership training within the performing arts. They appeared passionate about improving their techniques, whether by learning as students, by teaching as instructors or by using their art forms to guide them as administrative leaders in higher education.

Discussion of the Results

On the basis of this study, founded on the information that was collected, it is evident that leadership training within the performing arts is experiential in nature. Addressing leadership skill acquisition, the study indicates that by practicing and “doing the work,” students, in leadership-training programs as found in the performing arts, are simultaneously, consciously or unconsciously, honing in on the acquisition and application of leadership skills. The above, coupled with the researcher’s quasi-participant observations, resulting from twenty years of teaching experience in the area of dance, focus on the following themes: hands-on application, time-management, social and collaborative learning environments, effective communication, adaptability, pedagogical styles, that transpired throughout the research: the strengths of experiential, and the effectiveness, of leadership-education styles in the performing arts.
**Hands-On Application**

It is through practical application that this simultaneity is achieved. The nature of the study’s three performing-arts disciplines requires that training simulate real-life circumstances. This goes beyond role-playing (Kirkpatrick, 1987; Cranton, 1989, 1992; Eitington, 1989) of real-life experiences and circumstances, action-learning (Eitington, 1989) or just plain “drama” (Ments, 1989), in which the use of acting methods to develop managerial skills focusing on communications and leadership is used (Mockler, 2002).

From the interviews and the programs that were studied, that a strong emphasis is on assignments that are as close as possible to the working environments the students will encounter as professionals. Conducting students learn by stepping up on a podium and leading a real musical ensemble, choreography students are assigned to create dances with real dancers and directing-students direct real actors. In none of these cases do the students or their peers *pretend* to be leaders or followers. They are the real thing.

As derived from the collected data, training methodologies in all three performing arts disciplines (i.e., orchestral conducting, choreography and theatre directing), focus on the physical and practical aspects of leading a group, a cast or an ensemble. It is through such hands-on application that the students learn and gain their experience as artists as well as leaders. Training rooted in such practical methods seems to open up and free the students to explore the real essence of their art. It provides them with an understanding of what it takes to be a conductor, choreographer or theatre director in all its facets, both as an artist and leader. Such an approach creates possibilities for these students to apply knowledge directly to their craft. It is this kind of environment that allows theoretical
knowledge to derive from experiential form. “We see theory in a very practical way. We put it into action, bringing what we learn in various classes into our work and how that information defines and influences our work” (SLC student, 2008). Hands-on training fosters an environment in which students learn from mistakes and triumphs through real-life experiences.

The hands-on application also includes the physical setting. It is important to note that the learning environment is done “in the field.” In all the programs that were observed students were working in a real-life environment similar to the space they would work in professionally – the studio, rehearsal room or the stage. The actual physical surroundings seem to contribute to the overall learning experience. The classes that were observed, as well as most courses listed on the curriculum of each program (see figures 1-4 p. 72-74), meet in a studio or specific rehearsal spaces. Few classes are scheduled in a lecture hall or a conventional classroom unless they are designated as lectures (see Image VI.1). In the performing arts, the studio resembles a lab
much more than it does a lecture hall. A choreographer needs to work in a studio as a chemist or biologist needs to work in a lab.

It is learning by “doing”, by being a part of an experience as opposed to reading about the experience or theorizing about it. In their article on Aesthetic Leadership, Hansen et al. (2007) refer to such an interactive experience as “made, shared, transformed and transferred in relationships by ways of interaction.”

It is through the “doing” of these techniques, and not only understanding these practices, that artists gain leadership experience (Beck et al., 2008). The physical experience is at the core of such training (Polisi, 2008). In the performing arts, one can only gain experience by standing in front of an orchestra, or in front of a cast of actors or dancers and directing them. The programs are project-driven and are based on the idea that “one’s vision as a director is developed through practice, encouragement, critical feedback, collaboration and more practice” (Columbia University, 2008). As a conducting teacher, one cannot hone the skills of the craft without truly “doing it” (Botstein, 2008). “We don’t have a leadership class; it actually happens from practicing, doing” (Columbia student, 2008). “Doing” is prevalent in the arts and particularly in the performing arts where mastery and craftsmanship appear to develop only through direct experience and adaptation (Dreyfus, 2001). The art of conducting is about very specific skills, yet the only way to learn the craft is by doing it (Botstein, 2008).
In the arts “action is perfected through application and often without the need for intervention by the written word” (Chia, 2003). This is not to say that there is a detachment from the written word in the performing arts, but to emphasize that the process of acquiring knowledge is centered in a direct, continuous investigative work. “Abstract explanations can be helpful in bringing us from a novice status to one of competence. But proficiency and mastery cannot be attained without direct unmediated involvement” (Dreyfus, 2001). As Dreyfus indicates, transpiring in leadership education is achieved through “realist ways of knowing . . . one has to be there and experience the situation to understand it . . . to know what it is like” (Hansen et al., 2007). Therefore, real-life-based learning environments can enhance student understanding of leader-follower interaction.

In addition, leaders in the performing arts have, for the most part, come up through the ranks. They have had the practical experience of being a “foot soldier,” which augments their “doing” experience. Conductors are musicians who have at some point in their careers played as part of a music ensemble. Choreographers emerge from individuals who began as dancers and have been a part of creative processes working under the direction of other choreographers. And actors have had the experience of being directed. Leaders in the performing arts have been led. They have that perspective and experience of what it is like to be on the other side. Most often they arrive from the bottom up. It plays to their advantage to come up through the ranks and have had the experience of being a “foot soldier” (Botstein, 2008).
Time-Management

Likewise, time management is a large part of each of the programs observed. The full curricula of courses are taught within a tight schedule. This teaches students how to work under pressure and manage time wisely. It also requires them to constantly produce material within a short period of time. Consequently, students are not allotted much time to analyze or be too meticulous about details. This type of pressure forces students to learn swift decision-making (Sogunro, 2004). It forces them to rely less on what they have done in the past and come up with new ideas to solve problems and challenges as they face new assignments. Not surprisingly, some students referred to their programs as “leadership boot camps” (Columbia students, 2008). Such programs constantly put their students in positions of leadership by requiring them to face new ensembles, casts of dancers or actors giving them real, live leadership experience to create new work. These are programs that almost naturally create “forms of dynamic, goal-directed action occurring under pressure and responsibility” (Vaill, 1991), often affiliated with the common subject matter of effective leadership. Although “there is not a leadership program that is going to teach you all the pressures of this job” (Heckler, 2008), training within such programs found in the performing arts comes close to doing just that. There are some conflicting perspectives in terms of time management. Although the tight schedule is demanding in terms of productivity, time management and adaptability to a constant flow of new work, such an intense time schedule does not allow students to step back and reflect on their creations. A concentrated timetable as this seems to narrow the focus which is primarily on technique and artistic skills acquisition and less so on the
larger picture. There is no time to step back and evaluate one’s own work and how it fits into a broader social context.

**A Social, Collaborative Environment**

The study cannot identify specific leadership-training courses in the performing arts that would be transferable to other leadership-training programs. What does surface, is the overall pedagogical style of these programs as found in the performing arts. An example being that the programs which were observed are characterized by a social context, an environment where students work together and feed off each other. They share their own leadership experiences, contributing ideas and suggestions to one another. The teaching style within these programs mirrors a web of communication between instructor and students as well as between the students themselves. In these programs information flows in all directions as opposed to the more conventional pedagogical methods of “spoon-feeding” students with specific pre-formulated data (i.e., text books, articles, presentations). The learning environment that was observed in the study is one that allows room for the students to reflect on their course of action and at the same time determine which direction they want to take.

Theatre directors and choreographers are “consensus builders,” states Beck (2008). Being a director or choreographer, like a president, is all about shared governance, and building a vision that others will support and help implement. “My training in the performing arts did prepare me for my current job in the presidency. Any director in a production and a president needs to build a team with various viewpoints and
perspectives, but it’s up to the director to assimilate it all and bring it into a compelling vision that everyone can buy into” (Beck, 2008). This is done through the creative process, the act of mounting a play or choreographing a dance. In other leadership-training programs this could be achieved through internships rather than role-playing simulations. As interns, students would be assigned real-life leadership team-building assignments that could be supervised and corrected if needed.

Leadership is a two-way street, a give and take and a dialogue. The work and accomplishments of any dialectical team or organization is determined by the work of the whole, not the individual. “Everything we accomplish happens through teamwork . . . followers really determine how successful a leader will be” (DePree, 1992). Collaboration is one of the main skills that effective performing-arts training programs teach. It is almost an inevitable byproduct in learning environments as found in leadership programs in the performing arts. “The choreographer has the vision and in order to achieve and make it happen you have to direct and collaborate” (SLC student, 2008). Directors share a similar vision, as suggested by the Columbia student who stated, “I am drawn to directing as I’m interested in the role of leadership within a collaborative art form” (2008). The physical nature of the courses requires students to work with other people, together, physically in the same space, room or studio (See Image VI.2 p.92)
As leaders of ensembles, casts of dancers or actors, they cannot work alone or achieve and accomplish any assignment on their own. “I choose to make stories into a dance and in the process I collaborate with others,” one SLC student acknowledged (2008). The nucleus of the art calls for teamwork. It is all about “ensemble work” (Botstein, 2008), and this group effort is also what it takes to run a college or any other organization. Results cannot be achieved through solo work. “Grand dreams don’t become significant realities through the action of a single person” (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). It is true that the size of the teams might vary with each assignment, but whatever the size, performing-art leaders require a group of people to work with in order to turn their ideas and visions into realities. This ensemble dialectic requires these leaders to work within a “social process” (Barker, 1997) through interaction with others rather than through the “individual and cognitive” (Fairhurts, 2007) process that is more commonly found in other leadership-training programs. One could argue that possessing informed social networking skills is necessary for any leader in any profession, but it seems especially true in regard to
performing-arts leaders; they need to come in direct contact with their followers. They are physically directing their “organizations.” The social-process situation common to performing arts obligates these leaders to foster a collaborative environment; otherwise in most instances they will not be able to achieve their goals and objectives.

Although inherently social due to their collaborative nature, training methodologies as well as the creative processes in the performing arts encompass dynamics that are more group-oriented rather than individually focused. As leaders who are called to work with groups and ensembles, there seems to be an absence and attention to the personal one-on-one social interaction. Indeed, these leaders learn to lead and manage groups but when faced with a situation that requires addressing one individual from the group, currently there is no training that addresses this.

Effective Communication
The challenges that face any ensemble leader in the performing arts (i.e., orchestral conductor, choreographer, or film/theater director) are similar to the challenges faced by leadership and management personnel in other fields. “Forms of dynamic, goal-directed action occurring under pressure and responsibility” (Vaill, 1991) are most often affiliated with effective leadership in the large sense of the subject. Communication and people-management skills are other traits a leader needs (Blanchard, 2006). These can also be found among the skills that leaders within the performing arts commonly exercise them. Such leadership traits are found in the core of any creative process (i.e., production).
Furthermore, as literature referenced for this study contends, to some extent “art and leadership are close in actual practice” (Smith, 1996).

Communication abilities are essential to sound leadership. It is through communicative actions that effective leadership is formed (Hodge & McLain, 2005). These include strong listening skills, clear direction, creative thinking, imagination, an ability to escape past practices, intuition and visualization, all of which evolve out of communicative social processes and training (Beck; Heckler). Heckler (2008) underscored this point, stating that he applies theatrical direction skills everyday in his current position. A president, like a conductor, needs to be a good listener and to have the ability to understand the aspirations of others and guide them towards a common goal (Botstein, 2008).

In the performing arts, effective communication skills are not only verbal and physical but include the observation and listening of others. Leaders are trained to lead by “observing and listening” (DePries, 2008) to others. To lead an ensemble in the performing arts is to lead and present a performance of some kind in music, dance or theatre. Therefore it is almost inevitable that leaders in the performing arts are trained to listen and observe closely, and are able to respond to what they hear and see. The role of the instructor within such training programs is to observe and assess the students, not so much for what they have to say but how they say it and how they interact and communicate with others (Bogart, 2008).
Adaptability

The styles of training that were observed also focused on change-management, i.e., the ability to cope with the new unexpected. Leaders in the performing arts need to be “open to change that might occur” (Rudner, 2008). As future leaders, performing arts students have to deal with problems as they arise. They constantly have to monitor the situation, the creative process. It is about “juggling psychology and ideas” (Bogart, 2008) and being able to adapt to change when needed. A conductor, for example, steps up on the podium, giving immediate feedback to the group and receiving immediate response from the group. To be able to handle and assess mass-participation situations one has to be able to approach them with an open mind, with no preconceived notions and be ready to make changes as needed. Flexibility is quintessential to any form of training and education in the arts and crafts (Ruskin, 1927). Such freeing of the mind allows one to “adapt effectively to new circumstances” (Chia, 2003). It is what one of Japan’s most outstanding businessmen, Konosuke Matsushita (1978), termed a Sunao, a perspective or state of mind that allows a leader to be open to experiences.

Such interactive experience, in group learning, through “team approaches to instruction” (Shakeshaft, 1993) can also teach adaptability. It is about creating situations in which students are actually learning from their own experiences, from physically going through the motions of leading a group (see Image VI.3 p.96). This social connection and experience is referred to as “sensory knowledge and felt meanings” in relation and reaction to objects and experiences (Hansen; Ropo & Sauer, 2007). By going through such a learning experience, these students are learning by teaching themselves. “The
students have to find and explore those skills from the process, the actual work and engagement in the action” (DePreist, 2008). Such ultimate truth is gained through interaction within a social environment, which stimulates the senses, feelings and emotions. It is the feeling, that conductors experience standing in front of an orchestra, a very real experience. All at once “you feel the emotions of all those people working together” (Donkin, 1999).

**Pedagogy**

The teaching styles observed in this case study reflect five staple elements. These include role-playing, teaching by guiding rather than imposing, encouraging creative freedom, and allowing time for reflection on accomplishments.

Mark Heckler (2008) still uses theatrical direction techniques he learned as a graduate directing student. Like the director, as the president of Valparaiso University, “I help guide, shape and mold toward an imaginative vision and am open to all the talents and abilities of what the ensemble will bring to bare. The president’s role uses the same
mental map or model to frame what happens here [at the university].” For James DePreist (2008) the conductor “needs to lead an orchestra by giving the impression that she or he is not doing it but that they are all doing it together.” The first thing is for the orchestra to, adds DePriest, is to “buy into you, how you conduct and interpret the music. The conductor needs to lead in such a way that it becomes a collective act”

Pedagogical techniques used in the training of future leaders that incorporate role-playing models (Sogunro, 2004) have the potential of giving students a more realistic leader/follower perspective. But performing-arts leadership training is even more realistic and takes leadership training one step further. As mentioned at the top of this chapter, students do not take on leadership roles and play the part of a conductor, choreographer or theatre director but rather are that specific leader. By learning and training to be artists, they assume a real position as leaders. They lead real groups and ensembles of artists in real environments (i.e., rehearsal halls, studios or on stage). They are given realistic assignments relating to the creative processes they need to master in terms of their art and in so doing they are simultaneously learning and experiencing the art of leadership.

The methodology used in the performing arts to train conductors, choreographers or theatre directors puts these students in situations of “ultimate reality” (Chia, 2003). It creates learning environments that teach leadership in “realist ways of knowing where one has to be and to experience the situation to understand it . . . to know what it is like” (Hansen et al., 2007).
In other fields of leadership-training the equivalent for such a “studio” learning environment might call for classes to meet in a conference room rather than a conventional classroom or lecture hall. Such an environment would help to take the “classroom” out of leadership pedagogy and place it in a more practical context. Placing students in such a “natural” environment, in which they would ultimately work and function as leaders, would bring their learning experience closer to its “real-world” functionality. This observation does not infer that by establishing a physical environment leadership pedagogy would be complete. The study suggests that attention to the physical learning environment is important and can contribute to the outcomes of a leadership-training program, but that the content of and style teaching within such an environment, as presented in this and the previous chapters, is still as imperative to the effectiveness of the course.

Instruction in such programs is done through guidance rather than through the dissemination of material and information. Ultimately, the ability to lead an orchestra, dance ensemble or cast of actors is a skill that one cannot teach. It is “inexplicable” (DePriest, 2008) and seems to suggest a relationship based on “chemistry” between leader and followers that works or does not work. It seems to extend beyond a technical proficiency of how to wave the conducting baton or how to execute a specific dance move. “This chemistry cannot be taught, no matter how technically proficient the conductor is” (DePriest, 2008). “There is no mastering of the craft… you [either] have it or you don’t” (Bogart, 2008). The students have to “figure out the how” (Rudner, 2008). This is done by physically working and trying different methods. Students try different
approaches and solutions. The instructors guide, suggest and give immediate feedback (See Image VI.4). They give “a series of possibilities that the students might not have perhaps entertained” (DePreist, 2008). The students have to find and explore those skills from the process. “It actually happens from practicing, constantly doing. You hone your skills as you go along. We are offered a whole bunch of tools. It’s up to us [as directors] to figure out the way and style in which we want to use these tools to direct” (Columbia student, 2008).

Leadership skills are thus achieved by faculty allotting students creative freedom within the curriculum. The programs are unique in that there is no cookie-cutter product in which each program tries to mold its students. There is no one distinct leadership style or specific leadership tool that can shape and define the perfect conductor, choreographer or director. “They [the faculty] don’t want us to make a work that they like or enjoy. They want us to make work that we are satisfied with through the process and end product” (SLC student, 2008). The character of the respective programs and the training
methodologies used by their instructors mirror a laboratory-like setting where students experiment and make choices that work for them. The classes are structured and conducted in a way where “we have the freedom of how and which direction we would like to pursue within this medium” (SLC student, 2008). The students are continuously “doing the work, trying and failing and constantly trying other ways to solve problems” (Columbia student, 2008). “We are not forced to take on the instructors’ choices and are free to question them [the instructors]. It gives us independence as artists to create” (SLC student, 2008).

This independence is not transparent or stated within the curricula as “there is no set formula to get this done. There is no one way, one technique. Whatever you use it needs to work” (DePriest, 2008). A pedagogical concept applicable to choreography, conduction or directing training programs is defined as a “physical discussion” (Rudner, 2008). It is a way of teaching by allowing students to be fully immersed in the process on one hand and allowing students to observe as spectators from the sidelines on the other. It is learning by “being a part of the action” as well as being able to lead (i.e., conduct, choreograph or direct) “long distance.” If directing from the “outside,” through observing and listening only does not work, there is a need for the director to physically demonstrate what he or she is asking of the group (Rudner et al., 2008).

Importantly, learning environments in the performing arts and their methodologies foster experiential application and a hands-on approach applicable to leadership training. The style of pedagogy as observed through this study promotes leadership qualities within a
social context rather than learning environment methodologies that focus on a more theoretical approach of research and investigation; the latter fosters individuality and seclusion. In the performing arts, leadership preparation programs reflect a more “student-centered approach,” one which involves the student in the learning process and eliminates “student anonymity” (McCarthy, 1997).

Unlike conventional leadership-training programs, leadership preparation as seen in this study seems to develop through and becomes a “social process” (Barker, 1997). It does not reflect an “individual and cognitive” (Fairhurst, 2007) process in which the emphasis of the teaching is text-driven and the experience is gained through “telling and theory” (Boggs et al, 2007). The methodologies and techniques that are found in performing arts leadership programs focus on group learning and to bring forward the experiential knowledge that these students will need as future leaders.

But learning to work with others is just one part of leadership training. A collaborative learning setting, as found in these leadership-training programs within the performing arts, has a number of layers beneath its outer crust. Collaboration- and ensemble-work create situations that nurture other social leadership qualities and traits. In the performing arts leadership is an emotional, physical process. It is a process that is beyond the cognitive, one that deals with behavioral symbols and involves participation through such contact with others (Goffman, 1967). “I learn how to interact with my dancers in the most efficient and productive way and [I] take responsibility for the process we initiate,”
explained a SLC student (2008). Such processes call for and thus teach effective communication skills.

Allowing the students to reflect on their work is also an integral part of the teaching style found in such programs. “We are pushed to explain and answer questions too. This is not a program about training but about consciousness, being conscious of the choices one makes. How do we use different movement strategies to make choices in how to create a dance?” (SLC Students, 2008). It is about giving the students an opportunity to reflect on their actions and not just carry them out because they were told or taught to do so.

Limitations

Despite such pedagogical styles and training techniques, the study found some areas in performing-arts leadership training programs that could use some augmentation. Although site visits were conducted in only two such programs, this sample, coupled with the diverse group of interviewees, represent an adequate account of leadership-training programs in the performing arts. As stated at the top of this chapter, these finding are coupled with the researchers’ professional expertise in the performing arts.

Strong attention to technique and artistic-skill acquisition gives little room for a broader perception of the art itself. It appears that the focus of such programs is mainly on developing the craft, i.e., the art of conducting, choreography or directing. Performing-arts curricula can be much more intentional in building leadership skills and should have classes that bring out the application of what performing artists are learning. The artistic
and technical skills are stressed and the emphasis, especially in dance and choreography, evolves around the acquisition of nonverbal skills, which creates a certain

Such confined perspective carries other implications in terms of educating leaders. There needs to be an emphasis on placing performing artists in more social environments where they have to interact and speak about their craft and work. This should not be done with those they work with but with others outside their area of expertise and their art form. Social discourse and interaction would help inform directors and help them understand what is happening with other people when working within a creative process (Heckler, 2008). Conductors, choreographers and directors need to have a “larger vision of the universe and the society they’re working in” (Polisi, 2008). They need to be open to new ideas, and immerse themselves in many cultures to understand them. They cannot only be concerned with the technical aspects of their respective craft. As leaders they will need to have a much broader perspective and understanding of their institute and its culture (Botstein et al, 2008).

As mentioned earlier, lack of time is an issue, as are courses that provide students with dialectical learning opportunities outside of their rigorous training schedule are noteworthy. If afforded more flexible schedules and a wider variety of courses within and outside the programs, students would get a chance to see beyond the studio or rehearsal hall and take an outside perspective of their work. It could be an area that will strengthen leadership training in the performing arts. Although at a graduate level, programs could extend beyond the 2 to 3 year period and thus ease time limitations. This
would allow students to progress through a program in a way that gives them time to take a broader view of their art.

Creating opportunities for students to express themselves other than through their medium (i.e., conducting, choreography or directing) might be helpful and effective to their overall training experience. “The one thing that we could use more of is actually speaking about our dances. Writing could be used more. Putting down in words who we are as artists and what it is we would like to create” (SLC student, 2008). Courses in which students are given the opportunity to discuss their role and place as artists and their creative work within the larger context of the community and society could be beneficial. Public interaction and discourse would help inform directors and help them understand what is happening within a larger social context when working within a creative process (Heckler, 2008). Such opportunities would allow students to get a clearer understanding of their work and who they are as artists, and ultimately allow them to grow and mature as conductors, choreographers or directors.

Furthermore, there are other social aspects that these programs could strengthen. Some findings in the study indicate that curricula and methodologies used in these programs tend to lack attention to some of the social aspects that are associated with effective leadership. Although social in character and style of teaching, there is no attention to the micro-social aspect that leaders in the performing arts need to deal with. The delicate one-on-one social interaction is not formally covered. It is covered on a need-to-know basis only to solve periodic problems that arise during other skill acquisition training.
Implications and Suggestions

This study focused mainly on the experiential aspect of three leadership programs in the performing arts. As the core of such programs is in the *doing*, the assessment and evaluation that are emphasized are based on the product and final presentation (i.e., concert or play) rather than on the process. The process seems very much open to interpretation and is left for students to explore. “There is no one style that can be taught as there is no one style of choreography” (Rudner, 2008). Through process-based learning, students find their own style and creative techniques rather than attempting to adopt an attitude or posture of another conductor, choreographer or director; “you have to be yourself” (DePriest, 2008). The process seems to be the means to an end and is not the main focus of these programs. As a result of the students continuously immersed in the *doing*, of the craft (learning how to conduct, choreograph or direct) experience and knowledge are gained. As mentioned earlier, students are guided through a process but are not “spoon-fed” information. It is through experiential training and methodologies that the students gain their experience. They acquire the skills they need to accomplish the task through the assignments they are given as artists as well as leaders. Ultimately the objective of such courses in the performing arts is to give students the experience in their specific art form. The craft of creating music, new dances or staging plays is the main motivation for the students as well as the instructors. These students are not enrolled in such programs in order to take on administrative positions in the arts, higher education or any other field, but rather are focused on honing their skills and craftsmanship as artists.
In a continued search for the quintessential leader in any field and how best to train such a leader, one of the main questions that keeps surfacing from literature regarding leadership is whether leaders are born or made (Mintzberg 2006). Mintzberg states that the quality of a leader is the combination of both the person (i.e., natural abilities) as well as training (i.e., the acquired skills) he or she receives. This study did not examine this specific aspect, but rather the question of theory verses practice. The findings do support the notion that leadership training should be a combination of both theory and practice; therefore one could draw some relationship between both Mintzberg’s arguments and this study. Other scholars raise similar arguments, pointing to similarities between art and management (Boettinger, 1975; DePree, 1987; Klein, 1999; Kelehear, 2006), especially in terms of acquiring leadership traits and managing the “craft of leadership.” They argue that such skills cannot be acquired through reading or the discussion of the theoretical aspects of the subject alone. Furthermore they point out that such educational approaches only give a limited and superficial perspective of the subject (DePree, 1987; 1992; Chia, 2003). Concept attainment within a specific discipline can be accomplished only through practice, i.e., practical application and repetition. Therefore, leadership education should also focus on hands-on-based methodologies and training techniques that are more experiential, like those that are more commonly used in the performing arts (Kurpers, 2002).

Leaders are practitioners. They “must act… without actions or principles, no one can become a leader” (DePree, 1993). To that extent, the doing component, the physical application of theory into practice in training leaders and managers is important. It
provides future leaders with the tools they need to be effective and competent leaders. Leadership programs should embrace both practice and theory components in their curricula. One method should not take precedent over the other and thus sacrifice realistic learning and effective preparation for the profession. Without the practical aspect of the training the theory component lacks “any immersion in contexts and condition of practice” (Dewey, 1904) and vice versa. Tensions between theory and practice, and the dilemma of which of these approaches to use, does exist. It is essential and unavoidable as one approach feeds off the other. Literature points to a disconnection, a separation that could be compared to two magnetic ends that refuse to connect but that should be able to coexist within a productive environment (Schulman, 2004).

Practice and theory should go hand in hand. Programs and instructors do not need to make a choice or favor one over the other. This study supports that concept and works to bring to the foreground the idea that a separation should not exist. Furthermore, this study supports the continued effort to bridge and find new methods of maximizing what each approach can contribute to the other. Such an amalgamation of practical and theoretical techniques could contribute to and bring about effective methodologies to leadership-training curricula. Those programs of leadership in the performing arts and in other fields have the potential of merging ideas, pedagogies and training techniques as they strive to better the preparation of future leaders in all areas. The combination of theory-based training found in most leadership programs and the practical training used within the performing arts could contribute to the creation of models of excellence for effective leadership-training programs. This study makes the case for the relevance and
value of performing arts programs within higher education and the contribution they can make beyond the sheer entertainment value and arts vocations.

Summary

This study has given me a dual perspective of the topic of leadership training. On one hand, I recognize how my experience as a choreographer echoes the findings of this study and the value of my training as a performing artist in relation to the subject of leadership education. On the other, the experience that I have gained and information that I have gathered throughout this research closely reiterates my work as a choreographer.

My training experience in performing arts aligns well and is similar to that discussed in Chapter V. I learned to choreograph by doing. As a choreographer I have gained experience and leadership skills by working with a variety of dancers both in both small and large ensembles during my training and as a professional. I have gained expertise while being engaged in creative processes and in the craft and art of making dances.

In competing for leadership positions, performing artists are in a bit of a “prejudicial climate.” (Beck, 2008) Because there are not many who are leaders outside their area of specialization as conductors, choreographers or theatre directors, it is assumed that is indicative of the capacities of performing artists to lead outside their field. “It is up to us in the performing arts to communicate the leadership potential that our arts hold” (Beck, 2008). There is also room for leadership-training programs in all disciplines to further explore the human dimension. Working with others, directing people and inspiring
individuals for a common goal are a part of productive and effective leadership. In this regard, leaders in all fields can use better and improved training. In terms of the performing arts training and education there is room for future artists to be exposed to the larger picture into which they fit. Many young artists do not venture out of their day-to-day activity of training and rehearsing to realize their potential in terms of administration. Such realities may lead to convictions that most artists see administration as being very dull and too repetitive, which is not the case. It “can be unbelievably creative” (Beck, 2008), and from the opposite perspective, for those who are not familiar with the performing arts and the creative processes, the arts are seen for their sheer pleasure and entertainment value only.

This study sets out to advocate the contrary to both these views. It hopes it shed light and bring forward the importance of the arts and their place in higher education. By focusing on one aspect of the benefits of an education in the performing arts, this study brings attention to the art of leadership and the importance and the value of leadership training and pedagogy as found in the performing arts programs in higher education. Further study could perhaps focus on leaders of institutes in higher education who do not have a background in performing arts leadership and how their training helps them in their current position or not. Interviews would be conducted in a similar fashion to those that were conducted in this study with the four university presidents.

The general view of the arts is that they are only for a selected social group. But at times of budget cuts and financial constraints on educational systems, there should not be a
rush to downsize or eliminate programs in the arts. Rather, their importance should be emphasized in regards to the contributions they make to leadership training. This study advocates that the arts contribute to society and education beyond the superficial attributes of entertainment and beauty that usually come to mind when thinking of the arts.

Leadership is truly a craft, an art (DePree, 1987). Thus the preparation of practitioners who have the theoretical and the practical knowledge to navigate their professional field should be reflected in the training models that they are engaged in. The subject of leadership will continue to evolve as the character and definition of organizations change as do the leaders who run them. Leaders will be asked to be more susceptible to the changing climate of the organizations they head, to the social environment in which they exist and the economic climate under which they exist. With organizations becoming more “loosely coupled,” and functioning in a more horizontal configuration rather than in one that is influenced by hierarchy and control, leaders will need to exercise more openness and democracy (Slater, 2001). Leadership will be dependent on the ensemble, the team. Leadership of tomorrow will need to be focused on “an institutional capacity, not solely an individual trait” (O’Toole, 2001). Leadership is like music: “It exists and it doesn’t. It is written on the page, but it means nothing until performed and heard. Much of its effect depends on the performer and the listener. The best leaders, like the best music, inspire us to see new possibilities” (DePree, 1992).
VII. Closing Remarks

Through this research I have uncovered some of the benefits of methodologies that are used in training performing artists as conductors, choreographers and directors, and the possible benefits these techniques might have to leadership-training programs in other fields. From what I have found it seems that such contributions by the arts have thus far gone untapped. As a dancer, choreographer and director, I have always felt that the performing arts have only been valued as an entertainment commodity and not for the educational potential that they truly hold. As an educator, I continually see the important role and place that the arts and the performing arts in particular play in higher education. As I conclude my work and reflect on all the phases and findings of this project, the question of what is the signature pedagogy of the performing arts arises. I would say that the answer to this question would be in the “doing;” in the practical experience that students in performing arts leadership programs receive while choreographing a dance, staging a play or conducting an orchestra. The educational and practical value embedded within each such creative process is, as stated in the findings, un-teachable. To learn, students need to live through the experience and be active participants in the process. It is the creative process that comes close to combining both the understanding and the action, blending both theory and practice into an effective training tool, one that gives students an unparalleled educational experience. Such an experience is as real an experience as students could attain in their preparation for a professional leadership role.

In that respect, this research has also changed my own pedagogical style. As my research progressed and unfolded, I translated some of the findings and central concepts into my
own classes. My courses now include a much more hands-on approach. Students are asked to be active participants in class. Instead of “spoon-feeding” my students with information I give them the opportunity to explore and learn on their own by actually “doing” the work. For example, in my dance technique classes I teach a movement phrase to the students who then get time to work on the phrase on their own. This gives them the opportunity to analyze the phrase. By giving them this assignment, I am asking them to independently explore research and, to some extent, analyze the phrase for its different components. These include the technical aspects of the phrase (i.e., how physically to execute it), understanding the musical dimensions of the phrase and learning the movement sequence within the phrase. I have found that through this approach, without showing them each element and merely having them mimic my moves, the students gain a better understanding and appreciation of the work. They end up truly knowing the movement: retaining it better, performing it in a way that makes sense to them and creating their own unique and honest performance.

Through my research I have strived to show that, in the performing arts, where training focuses on the creation of such artists as conductors, choreographers and directors, there is an unconscious facet that also trains these artists to be leaders. It should be noted that this study does not focus on the effectiveness of these leaders as opposed to leaders trained in other fields; although such a study could be interesting in itself. This work brings forward the argument that the performing arts have a central place within education in general and lend themselves well to the field of leadership training in particular. As I translate the findings of my research to my own teaching it seems that the
implications of this study can be applied to all aspects of education. As stated earlier, there is a body of research and literature that supports “active learning” methodologies in education and presents some positive findings. Through this study and through future studies I hope to continue to raise awareness to the imperative contributions the performing arts can make to teaching and their important role in education.
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Appendix 1.

Interview questions for university presidents

A. Personal background in the field

- What excites you about your current position?
- What makes a performing artist want to be an administrator?
- What led you to pursue a leadership role in higher education? And why?
- How do your background in the performing arts and your current positions co-exist? Do they co-exist? Can one live with out the other?
- How do you balance both?

B. Leadership Skills

- What were the performing arts training processes that you believe prepared you for your current position? What did you learn during your graduate training in the performing arts that helps you today?
- What does it take to be a ‘leader’ in directing an orchestra, choreographing a dance, or directing a play? What kind of skills and talents are required?
- Can any of these art-specific leadership skills transfer into the world of leadership in higher education? How so?
- Do you find that some of the skills and tools that a leader in the performing arts learns could be useful to others who aspire to leadership?
- Can you think of some incidents, events where you drew on your art-specific leadership skills and used them in your current position?
C. The Performing Artist and Leader

- What does it take to be an effective/successful conductor/choreographer/director?

- Do you see any direct connections between training in the performing arts and preparation methods for leadership? What main connections would those be?

- What would you say are some of the main commonalities between art and leadership, and between artist and leader?
Appendix 2.

Interview questions for faculty/instructors

- What drew/draws you to this subject and why teach it?
- How would you define conducting/directing/choreography? What is it?
- To a “layman”, how would you describe a conductor/choreographer/director? What is their task/job?
- What do you look for in a student that is interested in taking your course?
- How do you teach conducting/choreography/directing? What’s the process?
- What 2 – 3 aspects/characteristics/objectives would you say the course emphasize in mastering this craft?
- Beyond the art, the craft, are any social skills taught? How?
- What are some of the assessment criteria that you use to evaluate students work?
- What would be the main outcomes you expect to see from a student that goes through this course?
- Would you define a conductor/choreographer/director as leader? How so?
- Does the course focus on the acquisition of leadership skills? How so?
- What are some of the leadership skills that are included in your syllabus and how do you integrate them into the context of your course?
- What does it take to successfully complete your course?
- Would you say that the course prepares students for a professional career in their respective field? If not, why?
Appendix 3.

Interview questions for students

• Why conducting/choreography/directing?

• What (do you expect to) are you taking away from this course?

• What has this course taught you in preparing you as a conductor/choreographer/director?

• What were some of the aspects in directing that were new to you and that you did not expect you would learn or have to master?

• As a conductor/choreographer/director do you feel that this course addressed any leadership skills? If so, how? What are/were the main points that do so?

• Would you define a conductor/choreographer/director as a leader? If yes, how so? What makes a director a leader?

• What elements of the course (if any) did or did not give you practical experience in the subject matter?

• What was most beneficial aspect for you in the course, and why? What was the least beneficial part?

• Could the course use more theory or more hands-on components? And why?