What the matrix shows us is that indeed the territory is very messy and complex. There are a lot of similarities, but in the details the contrasts are quite striking. For example: Opéra National de Paris is very similar to the Royal Opera House in London on the level of size of the company and on the level of experience, but they differ a lot on educational context and on specific subdivisions of the education strategies. In the mid-range group (with about 10 years experience), there are some similarities between La Monnaie in Brussels, As.Li.Co. and Théâtre du Châtelet in Paris, but they contrast a lot in the range of specific educational strategies. And when looking at the companies with a recent education department Muziektheater Transparant seems to be the only company that does not work with schools thus they are contrasting on that dimension with all other companies, though they have some similarities with English Touring Opera and Glyndebourne in the other dimensions. Staatsoper Berlin is a big company with one opera educator focussing on totally different strategies compared to Muziektheater Transparant.

Big houses with a similar level of experience seem to differ in educational context and on educational strategies. Furthermore the size of the company does not necessarily have an effect on the size of the educational provision. So when taking these similarities and differences into account, the first filter to reach a manageable sample is based on the outcomes of this grid.

The criteria used are:

- Length of educational experience within the company: since one is looking for the views of opera educators working within an opera company the length of educational experience is an important criteria. I decided to concentrate at the range of companies having an education department for 10 years or more, which would offer me more chances to see whether there were internal or external influences on the education work done within the company. This brings the sample down to fourteen.

- The European aspect linked with the language aspect: since it is a study about opera education in a European context one would like to go for a diversity of countries within the final sample. The fact that the interviews would take place in the native language of the interviewee restricted the interviews to those that could be undertaken in languages I am fluent in i.e. Flemish, French, English, Italian and German. This excluded interviews in the Finnish National Opera (Helsinki), The Norvegian Opera (Oslo), The Göteborgs Operan or Gran Teatro del Liceu (Barcelona), because I was not fluent in their language and they were not necessarily fluent in English, and brought down the sample to ten.

When looking at the sample at that stage, six of the ten companies were UK based, which might skew the European aspect of the research. Thus extra criteria were put into place to narrow the sample down to ensure a range of European countries. These were:

- The variety of approach, which can be read from the table above.
- The place of education in the company, which could be determined from the further outcomes of the questionnaire (Tee and Tomlinson 2002).
- Whether the education department only covers opera or opera, dance and/or orchestra, which was determined when looking at the programme of the opera companies/houses.

The application of these criteria resulted in a sample made up from the following five companies and countries**:** The **Théâtre Royal La Monnaie** in Brussels - Belgium, which is a company operating in Brussels, which has an education department since 1992-1993; it is the only one with two education departments since the house is bilingual: Flemish and French. The education departments work with schools, but not narrowly linked to the school curriculum, the department presents versions of adapted original operas but they above all work closely linked with the repertoire and the programme of the house. The age range of people worked with starts at five and goes up to adolescents. The department basically covers opera and

has a dance company in residence, but the latter is not included in the education department's activities.

The **Royal Opera House** in London – UK, a big company having one of the oldest education departments, which involves opera, ballet and orchestra. It started in 1983. The department works closely with primary and secondary schools. Over the years the work with teachers took a very important place within the work of the department. Today the education department has an important role to play in Royal Opera House's outreach programme ROH2, bringing opera and opera development programmes into the country. With *Gentle Giant*, *Babette's Feast* and *Timecode* ROH Education recently started to produce new work. Over the past few years new media has been introduced into the education programmes: in2Arts on *Peter Grimes* students have the chance to explore opera using a software programme on computer to develop their own or an adapted version of the opera. The Royal Opera House houses an opera company, a ballet company and a symphonic orchestra. The department of education and access has an education officer for each of the disciplines performed at the ROH.

The Opéra National de Paris is also a big company with a long education tradition. The education unit in France has been active since 1984 and includes a ballet and opera for children in primary education, mainly based on performances for this age range in the small auditorium of the house, and workshops introducing the performances. A completely developed social programme for children in secondary education from deprived French backgrounds is supported by the national education system. The programme for this group covers 10 months to discover the different departments and to follow a specifically designed course including drama and singing classes. The project ends with a performance of their own opera. In 2004 Gerard Mortier started as the new general manager of the house which led to very important changes. The head of the young audiences programme (Jeunes Publics) programme now reports directly to the artistic director, whereas before a director of 'cultural services' was the line manager to the head of Jeunes Publics. The Opéra National de Paris plays in two houses and includes opera and ballet.

As.Li.Co in Italy, a small touring company in Milan, now also runs the Teatro Sociale di Como. Since the move to Como the education programme has been extended. Whereas it had been focused on opera before Como, the programme includes now also theatre and orchestra work. Their education programme 'Opera Domani' is over 10 years old and covers the northern part of Italy (Lombardia). The programme includes training for teachers in primary schools to give them tools to work on a specific opera in their classes. The children and their teacher then come and see adapted version of a traditional opera in a theatre near their school. During the performance of the 'baby-version' of a specific opera, there are several singalong moments. The head of Opera Domani is also manager of the Teatro Sociale di Como. Since 2002, As.Li.Co. has managed this theatre. From that date the company's work has enlarged with theatre and dance.

The final company sampled was **Junge Oper der Staatsoper Stuttgart**, which is just 10 years old and has a very specific place within Staatsoper Stuttgart. Using a specific methodology, 'dramatic interpretation', their department introduces opera to young people and works with a small group of youngsters preparing either a creation of a new commissioned opera or a performance of an existing opera for young people. A music director and a music specialist lead the department. Two educators are in charge of the pedagogical programme, one male and one female. Their work is concentrated on opera, but next season (2005-2006) a programme on orchestral work will be included.

Due to circumstances Junge Oper der Staatsoper Stuttgart was not able in the end to take part in the research. But even without the Junge Oper Stuttgart, the sample of Théâtre Royal de La Monnaie/ Koninklijke Muntschouwburg in Brussels, The Royal Opera House in London, The Opera National de Paris and As. Li. Co offered the opportunity to see whether the socio-cultural context had an influence on the practitioners' views and whether there were differences detectable across countries.

If one person had been interviewed per company a total of four interviewees would have taken part in this research. However, since the education department at La Monnaie is bilingual, and, due to the political situation in Belgium, both branches develop in a different way, the two education officers were included in the sample, which brought the total number of interviewees to five.

This might be considered to be a small sample, but since the present study really focuses at individuals' views in context and in-depth, this sample offers the opportunity to analyse these views in full. And thus be representative sample for this research. As mentioned earlier this sample also offers the possibility to compare the views with one another, but not in general, always in their context.

Once the sample was arrived at, it was necessary to choose the interview strategy suitable to the intentions of this study.

II.3 Interview strategy

Technically interviews can go from highly structured to totally unstructured, with semi-structured versions in between (Hobson 1998):

- *Highly structured interviews* are based on a structure set out in advance. The questions are closed and there is little freedom for interviewee and interviewer to intervene.
- *Unstructured interviews* look like everyday conversations; open and informal without a specific pre-set agenda. Since the interviewer has always some sort of agenda and at least one specific question s/he wants to research, totally unstructured interviews are unlikely to take place.
- *Semi-Structured interviews* lie somewhere in between. These are based on a certain set of questions, which leaves the opportunity for the expression of the interviewee's views.

A semi-structured interview technique seemed most appropriate for this study since a prepared agenda, made it possible to compare the outcomes of the different interviews involved, and offered room for the personal view of the person interviewed to be recorded.

II.4 The narrative approach within a semi-structured interview

The narrative interview technique used in social, educational and historical research seemed to me the most suitable way forward for this research. By using the narrative approach here the 'why' – question could be addressed in a gentle way. The interview brought the interviewees gradually into a reflective mode, thus revealing what motivated them even if it was not explicitly raised during the interview. The narrative approach captures the whole person and allows for the expression of their beliefs and passions. Another advantage of this approach was that through asking the participants about their personal background a contextual mirror to the participant was revealed without becoming deterministic. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the other advantage to this approach was that the in-depth analysis of a relatively small sample of interviews offered the researcher the opportunity to achieve an understanding that is shared by a wider population (Elliot 2005; Chase 1995).

Using a narrative style and encouraging personal autobiographical stories to be told allowed the research question to be applied from a more reflective and philosophical point of view.

The narrative interview developed in a conversational mode (the interviewer had been an opera educator herself which facilitated conversational mode of the interview see p. 3) in order to get as close as possible to the personal views of the interviewee through their personal story. A list of questions functioned as a checklist, so that the interview included the aspects necessary to answer the research questions mentioned in the first paragraph of this chapter and trying to find out what opera educators understood opera education to be, the reasons for their engagement

in it and whether the wider cultural, social and personal setting had an influence on this perspective.

In this way the interview schedule (see Appendix D) started with questions that stimulated the framing of the social context of the interviewee: where s/he grew up, when s/he had their first experiences with art education, when they first went to opera. Gradually the interview entered the field of opera education, beginning with the interviewee's first experience with opera education and the way they thought about it when they started working in opera education. The interview then continued with a range of questions involving the possible influences on the views of the interviewee. The interview concluded with a section focussing on views, dreams and beliefs about their work as opera education experts.

Since the interviews were modelled as a conversation the order of the interview agenda could differ from one participant to another depending on the development of the conversation and the issues raised by the interviewee. However, at every stage of the interview the research aims and the interview agenda were used as a comparative framework in order to be able to use the gathered data in the most optimal way when analysing the material and arriving at the research results.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face and were recorded. Each interview took about 40 minutes and was conducted in the native language of the interviewee to give them the opportunity to express themselves as freely as possible in relaxed circumstances. The conversational mode and the relaxed circumstances for both interviewer and interviewee resulted in the fact that the opera educators' views came more spontaneously, than was the case in the pilot study. Therefore prompting was not really necessary. It only happened when I felt I needed more detail to get a clearer picture of the views expressed. As such the narrative approach really did put the opera educators' individual views at the centre, without being biased by aspect considered to be important by the researcher such as happened during the pilot study, when looking at opera education (appendix B).

After the verbatim transcription, an English narrative was drawn up from the interview material. According to Elliot, '*a narrative can be understood as a bringing together a sequence of events into a whole and thus conveying a meaning of events'* (2005:2). As such the interviews were treated in a holistic way. The narrative was situated in the socio-cultural context the interviewee works in and added the personal background of the education practitioner to the case study.

In order to reach consistency in the presentation of each case study the structure of each narrative followed the same outline going from personal background to opera education and the wider cultural context, as such complementing each case study and relating back to the research aims. Thus the themes within each narrative were grouped as follows:

1. *Personal context*: family background, music/art education, education, and profession before working in opera/art education.
2. *First contacts with opera*
3. *Working in opera education*: working with and working in opera/art education, views on opera education at the time.
4. *Challenges and changes*: looking for the influences changing the actions of the opera practitioner over the years.
5. *Changing ideas:* looking for the influences that changed the thinking of the opera practitioner since his/her start.
6. *The education department within the company:* comparing from the moment the practitioner started up to today.
7. *The educational work in relation to the wider cultural context:* comparing from the moment the practitioner started up to today.
8. *Future perspectives:* giving the practitioners' view on what could be crucial for their work in the future, views on opera education in the future.

These themes, together relating to the initial research questions, were directive for the way I selected the parts of the interviews used in the narratives. As such these

narratives highlight how the opera education practitioner sees their work and bring forth how they view the meaning of their work. It also provided information on possible influences on the thinking and actions of each interviewee.

II.5 Data analysis

The data analysis and presentation of results is strongly linked with the chosen methodology and with the research questions (Robson 1993; Flick 2003). For the analysis of case studies, Yin suggests moving the data in different directions, making matrices of categories and placing the evidence within these categories. Displaying the data into a scheme makes it possible to examine the verbal data more closely (Yin 2003:110-112). Following Yin, the data collected in this research could be looked at from different angles; the interview could be looked at from a holistic point of view, the interviews could be related back to the personal and socio-cultural backgrounds of each of the interviewees, these personal and socio-cultural aspects could then be compared between interviewees and across countries, and last but not least the outcomes of the interviews and the confrontation with personal and socio-cultural backgrounds could be related back to the research questions.

I first related the research questions to the outcomes of each interview. Then I grouped the interview data and the socio-cultural material per interview under the categories used within the structure of the case studies and finally I brought all these aspects together in a contextual graphic. The latter gave me the opportunity to look at the views of each individual in relation to the research questions, identify whether and in how far personal and socio-cultural aspects influenced this view, and (when comparing the five charts with one another) whether there were cultural differences to be notified across countries.

Conclusions drawn from these viewpoints relate in the first instance to some more general but remarkable trends and then focus on more specific findings that are

discussed within the framework of the research outcomes and related back to the research questions.

Chapter III Case Studies

This chapter will present the five case studies developed around the five opera education practitioners in charge of education work in the four selected companies (Théâtre Royal de La Monnaie/ Koninklijke Muntschouwburg, Royal Opera House, Opéra National de Paris and As. Li. Co), each based in a different European country being Belgium, United Kingdom, France and Italy.

Every case study has the same design, evolving from more general aspects about the company moving towards a more specific focus on the place of opera education and the opera education practitioner. A quote on opera and its audience introduces each company followed by a snapshot of the company and its place in the operatic field of that country. These short introductions are to provide the knowledge of the context of the company within which the interviewee works, and involve the following aspects:

- the position and the history of the company within which the practitioner is active.
- the cultural and educational policy of the country the company is based in and the practitioner grew up in/works in.
- company specific details such as: number of performances, attendance rate, budget and mission statement.
- educational related aspects such as the place of education within the company, the educational mission, the educational programme and the audiences reached with these programmes.

Each of these sections of the snapshot relates to social, cultural, historical and economical elements relevant to get an understanding of each case presented in this study and represent the sociocultural framework against which the views and beliefs gathered through the interviews will be analysed.

The headings are the same for each case study, but the content of each section might differ a little due to the differences in the available material. These differences may be recognized in the historical and the cultural/educational background of the cases. In the section on culture and education for instance I looked for the links between culture and education in each country or region. For some countries this is a little more developed than for others because in some countries these links have been present for longer than others.

I decided to use audience data and budget data from the two most recent seasons covering the research period. For most case studies there is not really a difference between both seasons, but there is for at least one case study a major shift in management, and therefore it proved to be consistant to mention both season 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 for all cases.

The narrative generated from the data collected completes the case and interrelates with the elements from the preceding sections. The narratives give the reader insight into the rich and complex personal context of the interviewee. They are written as a portrait of each practitioner and explore his/her family background, the first contacts with opera, the experiences with opera education, challenges and changes as the interviewee sees them, the interviewee's view on his/her work in the context of the company and in the wider cultural context and the interviewee's future perspectives. Citations by the practitioner in the original language of the interview illustrate the narratives where appropriate.

Each case concludes with a section looking at the outcomes of the narratives in context relating back to the nested situation (see figure page 44) of each practitioner, and identifying what possible influences there are on the practitioners' views and beliefs.

III.1 Case study 1

III.1.1 Snapshot Royal Opera House

It's easy to wag an egalitarian finger at the Royal Opera House and regurgitate the tired notion that it provides elite art for the elite. Dismantling this distortion is an integral part of my role here. If we fail to address it, the Royal Opera House will become fossilised, an irrelevant relic roped off in the church of 'high art'. (Tony Hall, Sunday Times 16 March 2003)

Main auditorium 2267 seats
Linbury Studio Theatre 394 seats
Clore Studio 170 seats

1200 employees

Photo 1: Royal Opera House, London
© Royal Opera House

Though opera has its roots in Italy, it was France rather than Italy that influenced music theatre in the UK from the beginning of the 17th century. The performance of Perrin's and Cambert's *Ariane, ou l'Amour de Bacchus* performed for the wedding of the Duke of York and Maria of Modena, was sung in French although English musicians were well aware of Italian vocal and instrumental music. John Dryden (1631-1700) and Henry Purcell (1659-1695) marked in the foreword to the score of *The Prophetess*, published in 1691 *that English music is now learning Italian which is its best master, and studying a little of the French ayre, to give it somewhat more of gayety and fashion* (cited in Carter 1996: 27-29). The score resulted in English music with a flavour of Italian and French musical ingredients.

Opera might have been present at court, but England had a strong tradition of spoken drama with music and of 'masques', a mix of poetics, dance, songs around a masqued dance and based on mythological as well as allegorical subjects (Bossuyt 1990:68; Fiske 1995: 597) outside court. For instance John Blow's (1648-1708) miniature opera *Venus and Adonis* (1683) was still entitled as *A Masqye for ye entertainment of the King*. The first English opera was Henry Purcell's (1659 - 1695) *Dido and Aeneas*. This was first performed in 1689 at a school for young gentlewomen in Chelsea run by Josiah Priest (a professional dancer involved with London theatres), as a school-play (Carter 1996: 27-29; Radice 1998:73-74), which is quite unique compared to the other countries involved in this study. English opera developed slowly and it took quite some time before it got performed on a regular basis across the country.

Today there are 109 opera and music theatre companies in England, Scotland and Wales (small, middle scale and large). The Opera and Music Theatre Forum (OMTF), the representative body for opera and music theatre represents about 40 of them. This is a network of small and middle scale companies working to create an environment in which opera and music theatre can flourish, as it is stated on their website (OMTF [online] 2006). OMTF mainly represents the small and middle scale opera companies including the small, experimental departments of the six big companies such as English National Opera Baylis and Royal Opera House Education (see *A profile of Opera and Music Theatre Companies in Britain* 2001 and OMTF 2004). London houses two of the major companies The Royal Opera House and the English National Opera, as well as smaller companies such as English Touring Opera. The other major companies are Opera North in Leeds, Scottish Opera in Glasgow, Welsh National Opera in Cardiff and Glyndebourne Festival. *Arts in England 2003:attendance, participation and attitude* (2004) found that 6% of the participants in the survey carried out, has visited opera and operetta recently somewhere in the country.

Royal Opera House, London

The history of the Royal Opera goes back to 1732 when John Rich, impresario of the *Beggar's Opera* built a theatre on the site of what once was the garden of a convent. This aristocratic part of the city with a flower and vegetable market became a theatrical crossroads at the beginning of the 18th century. The place has welcomed three theatres in a row. John Rich's theatre was the first. In the beginning it was essentially dedicated to spoken drama, but soon he invited George Fredrick Händel in to give seasons of opera. Many of Händel's operas and oratorio were written for Covent Garden. In 1809 after a fire had destroyed the first theatre, the second Theatre Royal at Covent Garden opened in September with a performance of Shakespeare's (1564-1616) *Macbeth* followed by *The Quaker*, a musical entertainment. The audience's taste was really varied: opera, ballet, excerpts from Shakespeare could be followed by performances on the high wire by an acrobat. In 1843 the Theatres Act broke the patent theatres' monopoly of drama, which resulted in the fact that Her Majesty's Theatre at the Haymarket lost its name as a main centre of ballet and opera. When in 1846 Michael Costa, conductor of the theatre transferred to Covent Garden and took most of the singers with him the new opera was a fact. The building was remodelled and reopened in 1847 as the Royal Italian Opera with a performance of Gioachino Rossini's *Semiramide*. Operas were mostly sung in Italian whatever the original language was. About ten years later a fire destroyed the theatre for a second time. In 1858 the house reopened again (Carbourg 2005: 279-281; Fiske1995: 598; ROH [online] 2006).

By 1892 the number of French and German works on the programme had increased and the company changed names and became the Royal Opera House. Winter and summer seasons were given. In between seasons the theatre was closed and now and then provided a venue for film shows, cabarets, lectures or dancing. During the First World War the space was used as a furniture repository and during the Second World War the Royal Opera House functioned as a Mecca Dance Hall. Voices rose to keep it as a dance hall after the war, but music publishers Boosey and Hawkes acquired the lease of the building. David Webster was appointed as General Manager

and Ninette de Valois's Sadler's Wells Ballet became the Ballet of the company. The house reopened in 1946 with a performance of *The Sleeping Beauty*. In December of that year opera and ballet shared their first production with the performance of Henry Purcell's *The Fairy Queen*. In 1956 the Royal Ballet and in 1968 the Royal Opera received their Royal Charters. In the year the theatre reopened a Royal Charter installed the Arts Council of England (ACE). It succeeded the earlier Council for the Encouragement of Music and the Arts (CEMA), which had funded arts activity during the war years. ACE was installed as an arm's length body from Government, in order to distance itself from the perceived link between art and politics in Nazi Germany and with the remit of distributing Government funds to the arts with Covent Garden as a main beneficiary. Both the Arts Council's Charter and the ROH charter emphasise the educational remit of both organisations.

John Tooley succeeded David Webster as chief executive retiring in 1987 when Jeremy Isaacs replaced him. The period immediately before closure in 1997 marked a period of management turbulence which increased during the closed period and brought with it a succession of short term directors: Genista McIntosh, Mary Allen, Pelham Allen, Michael Kaiser and most recently Tony Hall.

The current building opened its doors on 4 December 1999. Over a period of three years the house was completely transformed. The historic part has been restored and a completely new public and non-public part has been added to the existing building to increase comfort for both visitors and performers/collaborators of the Opera House. Two additional auditoria are now available for performances: the Linbury, ideal for chamber opera, experimental dance, education activities and space for resident companies; and the Clore, the Royal Ballet Studio that can hold about 180 people suitable for more intimate events. Although the redevelopment programme of the ROH began in the early 1980s and its first phase included the addition of a wing on the James Street corner which included two major ballet studios, dressing rooms, an Opera Rehearsal Room, a Chorus Rehearsal room and offices it was not until the

arrival of the National Lottery (brought in by John Major's Conservative government in 1994) that there was the possibility of significant public funding for redevelopment of the site which was given to the ROH by Government. The Lottery awarded £58 million for the development plus a further £20 million for closure costs and this was complemented by donations and sponsorships to the value of £100million. Part of the lottery conditions included more accessibility, wider education work, disabled access and more public access to the organisation than had been possible in the past (ROH [online] 2006; Allison 2003; Fiske 1995).

Culture and Education in Britain

The policy on cultural education in Britain is more complex and goes back further than in the four other case studies in this study. It goes back to the after war period and is very much linked with changes in state funding. Arts funding (as mentioned above) came out of the work of CEMA during the war years and Lord Keynes who was the author of what became the Royal Charter had to make do with some compromise in that the primary purpose of public funding for the arts was d*eveloping a greater knowledge, understanding and practice of the fine arts*. And its secondary purpose was *to increase accessibility* (Imperial College London. Charter [online] 2007; Bunting 2006). There were other purposes but the point is that it resulted in a focus on a handful of artistic institutions rather than a general provision for the population more widely. Opera and ballet, plus theatre were the main beneficiaries (Sinclair 1995; Tambling 1997). Simultaneously a programme of education in the arts was developing in the country, growing out of some of the local authority funding and regional arts associations but, more importantly, the education system was moving away from a system where grammar schools (cf 1944 Education Act) were associated with the 'high arts' (taking children to opera, theatre or a museum) to a new comprehensive approach. Finally the Education Reform Act of 1988 established the National Curriculum, setting out what pupils should study, what should be taught and what the standards are that need to be reached. One of the changes according to arts education, more specifically to music education was the possibility of merging the current academic and theoretical study with a more

practical and student-based course and more in line with the life of professional arts organisations (Tambling 1997; DfEE 1995:16).

In the late seventies the leading players within the Arts Council began to adopt the view that arts organisations needed to become more accessible and that education – particularly through schools and colleges – was the key to that aim. As Pauline Tambling (Executive Director of planning and development of the Arts Council of England) explains in an interview with Neil Jones in 2002 '*that in the intervening period two major changes in the approach to education have been made at first there was a definite move to a participatory approach (rather acting than listening) later the expectation that organisations provide education programmes as part of their core programme became important*' (Jones 2002: 37). In seeking to put the arts on the agenda the working party was '*facing the central questions about the purpose of schooling, the balance of the curriculum … and the whole of education in Britain'* wrote Peter Brinson in the preface to the Gulbenkian Report *The Arts in Schools* (1982). That report was crucial to the young Education unit of the Arts Council to convince its major clients to establish an education department. The Arts Council set up its own Education Unit in 1979 under Roy Shaw's leadership. In the early 1980s the Arts Council started to require its clients to invest in education.

The local authorities have always funded the arts in the UK, particularly local theatres and arts centres. In the 1960s and 1970s they were key providers of Theatre in Education and until 2002, when Arts Council funding was increased, significantly together the local authorities in England were equally matching Arts Council funding at around £200 million p.a. This was mostly focused on the social benefit of the Arts and complemented the national companies. Local Authority funding decreased in the 1980s and 1990s. The Conservative Government merely reduced Arts funding resulting in major cuts in real terms across all arts organisations. This resulted in theatres like the ROH moving into sponsorship and other types of own income, which then created a more mixed economy in terms of income, and most importantly, for organisations like ROH resulted in ticket prices increasing out of recognition. From 1997 onwards the Government (New Labour) and Arts bodies

made a lot of efforts to widen access. In July 1997 the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) was established. Improving the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities is central to the department's aim (SR 2002). The department devolves responsibility, delivering goals for the arts to The Arts Councils of England, Wales and Northern Ireland for the delivery of these aims. Hence the Arts Council has the main aim to promote access, education and excellence in England. Five strategic priorities underpin this aim: new work, new artforms and collaborative ways of working, diversity and public inclusion, children – young people and lifelong learning, touring as well as distribution through broadcasting and electronic publishing (ACE 2003; Cowling 2004:2-3). In 1998 the document *A New Cultural Framework* announced that the DCMS would continue '*to make important contributions to the Government's agenda. Not only in culture, media and sport, but also in the broader areas of the economy, education, health, crime prevention and regeneration*' (DCMS 1998; Selwood 2006:39).

The incoming Labour Government set up a Social Exclusion Unit within the Cabinet Office and required all other Government departments to create a policy action team with its own report on how each department could contribute to tackling exclusion. This was a cross-government initiative. *The Policy Into Action Team 10 Report* (PAT 10) raised the profile of Arts and Sports participation through recognition of their valuable contribution to tackling social exclusion (1999:2). The Government's commitment to widen access and increase participation in the Arts was reaffirmed in the Green Paper, *Culture and Creativity: The Next Ten Years*. The paper included proposals to achieve these aims and possible projects such as the Creative Partnership scheme (2001). Arts, Education and Creativity are brought together in the project. Both the DCMS and the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) invested in Creative Partnerships (DfES £2 million per year in contrast to DCMS who invested £32 million p.a. through the ACE). The philosophy behind the scheme was said to be to *'animate the national curriculum (science as well as arts) and to enrich school life by making best use of the UK's creative wealth. The programme looks to the full richness of UK's cultural and creative resources (both public and private), engages directly with the standards agenda and with the national*

curriculum in unexpected ways and works on long-term and sustainable partnerships between schools and the broader community' (Creative Partnerships (2003-2007)[online] 2006).

With the Green Paper, *Every Child Matters* (2003) the DfES introduced a new approach to the well being of children and young people, from birth up to the age of nineteen. It resulted in the planning of services for young people in every local authority which are arranged around the needs of children rather than through specific policy areas e.g. education, social services etc. (DfES 2003; Every Child Matters (1995-2007)[online] 2006). The follow-up of this approach was made by *Youth Matters*, the DfES Green Paper and the Governments recent commitment to improve services and support for young people tailored to their needs. A reform of the provisions for children and young people has started. In *Youth Matters 2005* and *Youth Matters: Next Steps 2006* one can read that young people give many suggestions for activities in their area. Some of them simply '*wanted somewhere to 'hang out' where they would not be perceived as causing trouble'*. And sport was also a popular activity but some youngsters pointed out that *'other activities needed to be valued and supported'*. Other activities located in the Arts as well as '*activities that focus on moral and spiritual development'*.

The Arts Council of England is a prime partner in this challenge. Since two of the strategic aims of the Arts Council are diversity and public inclusion as well as children and young people, the focus on children and young people is thus always present. Ongoing projects underpinning this strategic aim are, for instance, the earlier mentioned *Creative Partnerships* and *Youth Music*, a UK-wide organisation (receiving £ 10 million a year from the National Lottery fund through the ACE) '*to provide high quality and diverse music-making opportunities for children and young people from birth till eighteen. Targeted are young people living in areas of social and economic need and thus which might lack the possibility to take part in activities outside school hours'* (Youth Music [online] 2006). The organisation also wants to improve the overall standards of music making across music styles and genres as

well as advocating the value of music making in advancing the educational and social development of young people. (DCMS [online] 2006).

In 2005 ACE published as a response to *Every Child Matters* a new strategy for *Children, young people and the Arts* and has added to this dimension since. The national strategy for *The Arts and young people at risk of offending* stated the belief that everyone in England, through early childhood to young adulthood and beyond, should engage with the highest quality of arts and creative experiences (2006:1) In its guidance *Providing the best* (2006) ACE defines the characteristics of high quality activities provided by artists and arts organizations when working for and with children and young people. Eight key characteristics of high quality experience are outlined which include: ideas that excite, inspire challenge or affect children and young people; affective partnerships between arts/arts organizations and children & young people; promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion and opportunities for children and young people to create their own art (ACE 2006).

A further result of all recent policies is that, not only for children and young people, but for all non-traditional audiences for art, diverse projects and programmes have been developed to engage them in the arts. ACE and DCMS developed, for instance, the *New Audiences for the Arts* (1998-2003) - programme exclusively to attract new and different people to enjoy the richness of the arts in the UK. The programme aimed '*to tackle the barriers which stop people engaging in the arts, increase the range and number of people participating in the arts, create new opportunities for people to become involved in the arts in different spaces and places and to allow learning and sharing of experiences between organisations to improve audience development practice'* (2004:2). In its *Ambitions for the Arts 2003 to 2006,* ACE adopts a more modern definition of the arts, *open to current trends in emerging arts practice, in arts and technology, and in breaking down the boundaries between artforms as well as between the arts and other disciplines* (2003). Access to the arts is without question linked with excellence. Bridges between excellence and access are formed by participation in, contribution to and engagement in the Arts. *'This is crucial in a society which is itself subject to ongoing change: more*

culturally and ethnically diverse, more educated and informed but also more distracted and cacophonous' (Ambitions for the Arts 2003*).*

Both Government and Arts bodies recognise that society is changing and so policy needs to be more flexible. '*What we need to do is to make complex culture, and the benefits it can bring, a reality to as many people as possible. 'They may choose not to pursue it until later in their lives; they may decide to use it to help them make a living in various ways. But they will have had the chance to engage with it'* writes secretary of state Tessa Jowell in the essay Government and the Value of Culture (DCMS 2004:17). Note that Jowell uses the term culture as meaning the cultural life of the nation: the intellectual and emotional engagement of the people with all forms of art. In its recently published vision statement, ACE adopted this democratic vision for culture, *placing the arts at the centre of national life and people at the heart of the arts* (ACE 2006).

III.1.2 Company mission statement

The presentation of opera and ballet performances at the Royal Opera House Covent Garden and the tours in the UK as well as overseas remain the principal activities of the ROH.

The ROH is established to increase the appreciation and understanding of the musical art in all its forms. To achieve this aim the ROH sets out to attract, excite and inspire the widest possible audience through performing opera and the highest international standards at affordable prices, developing the artforms and promoting their appreciation by people of all ages. A list of objectives is set to achieve the above-mentioned aim (ROH Trustees' report and consolidated financial statement, 28 March 2004):

- Pursuing the highest artistic standards in performances by the Royal Ballet and Royal Opera companies and the House's Orchestra and Chorus.

- Presenting a full annual programme of opera and ballet performances, chosen to give excitement and inspiration
- Developing the artforms of opera and ballet through commissioning and hosting of new works and encouragement of young artists
- Developing future audiences for, and public awareness of opera and ballet, through an education programme aimed at people of all ages, backgrounds and abilities, and through well-judged marketing and publications
- Under the banner ROH2, offering a range of alternative, smaller scale work in spaces away from the main stage designed to develop new work, new artists and new audiences
- Increase the accessibility of live performances by the House's companies through flexible pricing that balances the goals of financial responsibility and audience broadening
- Using all three main performance spaces of the House to promote all these objectives and to create a vibrant cultural centre that attracts and excites the widest range of audiences
- Developing and maintaining good governance, including strong artistic leadership and robust and efficient management, and thereby enhancing the synergy of the Royal Ballet, the Royal Opera and the House
- Ensuring good stewardship of public and private funding within a robust framework of efficiency and accountability
- Setting and delivering the highest standards on management of staff and health and safety

III.1.3 General view on performances and audiences

Reading from the table below (table 3) 303,097 people visited an opera production at the Royal Opera House in the main auditorium during the 2004/2005 season with 299 opera and ballet performances on the main stage and 399 opera and ballet performances away from the main stage (ROH annual report 2004/2005). The audience that got in touch

with the activities of the House through the Royal Opera House 2 (ROH2) - programme doubled in 2004/2005.

Table 3: Total number of visitors at the Royal Opera House 2003 – 2005

	2003/2004	2004/2005
Royal Ballet Productions	282,000	264,701
Royal Opera Productions	326,000	303,097
ROH2 Productions	30,000	63,892

The programme started in 2002/2003 presenting a wide range of innovative and accessible art in the alternative performance spaces of the Royal Opera House. It complements the repertoire on the main stage and increases the range of diversity of the artforms, the artists as well as the audience of the Royal Opera House. It is an answer to ACE's demand to open up the Opera House to a wider audience in favour of the higher amount of funding the House received after the reopening in 1999. The ROH2-programme takes place in the alternative performing places: The Linbury Studio Theatre, The Clore Studio and the Floral Hall. It thus provides spaces where independent artists, small-scale companies and ROH artists can experiment and collaborate across artforms. These new spaces, improving accessibility, were specific reasons why ROH was awarded lottery funding to develop the new theatre. In table 4 the ROH2 productions of table 3 are augmented with the direct reached audience, taking part in the activities happening in the Floral Hall and the Crush Room.

Table 4: Number of performances + attendance taking place in the alternative performing spaces at the ROH during the season 2004-2005.

2004/2005		
	Number of performances	Number of audience
Clore Studio	91	11,385
Vilar Floral Hall	56	9,684
Linbury Studio Theatre	209	52,507
Crush Room	43	4,835

III.1.4 General view of the budget

Fig. 4 a and b: income ROH 2004 and 2005

When looking at figure '4a and b' in 2005 compared to 2004 there is a decrease in box office income and in donations and legacies. In 2005 £ 0,8 million was placed in a capital fund to be able to keep the building a fitting site for the national ballet and opera in the coming years.

Fig. 5 a and b: expenditures ROH 2004 and 2005

As figure '5a and b' illustrates more than 70% of the expenditures is spent on performances, outreach and education. The total budget for 'Education and Archive'- investment increased by 1% between, 2003/04 and 2004/05. The increase is due to additional Arts Council funding. In the coming years ROH will invest a lot in the digitalisation and opening up of the archive to a wider audience. As such this activity is not surprisingly part of the education and learning programme of the Opera House. The current budget for this programme is about 3.5% of the ROH overall budget.

III.1.5 Education within the company

After the Second World War, time had come for a new order. The Labour Party Manifesto (1945) placed arts and education together. On the one hand there was the promise to extend access to culture for everyone and on the other hand there was the commitment to introduce free secondary education (Cowling 2004: 120-121). The 1944 (Butler) Education Act, a major piece of legislation, brought in a new approach to secondary education for all. It organised education as a tripartite system (grammar, technical and modern schools) with the philosophy 'equality of opportunity'. It was as major in scope as the introduction of the National Health Service. In the white paper *A Policy for the Arts – the first steps* (1965) the state concern, after a period under the Conservative Party again with Labour in office, for culture in the wider picture of society is expressed: *if we are concerned to win a wider and more appreciative public for the Arts, all this must be changed. A new social as well as artistic climate is essential* can be read in the introduction. There was an investment in infrastructure and community arts as well as arts in education. But although increasing resources for cultural spend was part of the Labour programme it was never universal in reach. There is still, up to today a significant part of the population that does not benefit from the arts despite the measures taken by the government throughout the years (Holden 2006:19; Cowling 2004:137).

III.1.5.1 ROH Education history

The first schools matinee at the Royal Opera House took place on 25 January 1947 when Covent Garden Opera Company and Sadler's Wells Ballet joined forces for *The Fairy Queen.* When the theatre closed in July 1997, the Royal Opera had performed 63 school matinees for young people and the Royal Ballet 62 reaching nearly 250,000 youngsters in their school years. The Royal Ballet Company established a small-scale 'educational performance' group called *Ballet for All* in 1964.

The project aimed at introducing ballet to those who never had the chance to experience the artform. In the late 70s and early 80s during the Christmas period The Royal Opera was involved in performances for family audiences.

Photo 2: Family workshop © ROH Education

But initiatives were not restricted to youngsters only. RO had already presented the Midland Bank Proms back in 1971, which went on till 1997. And there are the Paul Hamlyn Westminster Week performances for newcomers for ballet and opera since 1987, as well as subtitles for operas presented in the original language since 1986 for all audiences.

From 1983/4 students attended the school matinees and the 'Big Top' seasons of ballet performances by Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet. That year also saw the current programme for school matinee performances begin. In the late 70s and the early 80s there was a growth in the amateur movement alongside artist-in-residence projects.

This work inspired the Gulbenkian report *The Arts in schools* published in 1982. At that time the Royal Ballet appointed an Education Officer for dance to develop education work both for the Royal Ballet and the Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet. A year later in 1983 the appointment of an education officer for the Royal Opera followed. Sadler's Wells appointed its own officer in 1984. Since the start, the Royal Opera House Education Department sought to offer a wide range of programmes to increase access to performances and with success: '*For singers not versed in school matinees the temptation may be to be sulky: not a real audience, no connoisseurs and no critics, why bother to sing at your best? But within minutes of meeting their*

first schools audience I hope that the attitude ends. Not even a Proms audience gives you the standing ovations that these children come up with' says Lucien Jones (2004:49). Children as well as artists enjoy these performances, but apart from bringing new audiences into performances, ROH Education also runs projects fostering creativity and the promotion of active participation in projects by children, students and adults. The active involvement of ROH performers and staff are essential to the work of the department and central to the success of the projects.

ROH Education works in schools all year long. Since 1985, *Write an Opera*, an initiative especially designed for teachers, giving them the tools to support their pupils when creating their own opera performance, reaches hundreds of primary schools and is part of a European funded project developing collaborations with 11 European schools. Originally this arose from a collaboration with the Metropolitan Opera. Part of the programme involves major production projects lasting up to six months and concluding with original opera productions involving writers, composers, designers, directors etc.

Throughout the years television and new media have also played an important part in the ROH Education scheme. With *Top Score*, a TV series linking opera with sports, around 2.5 million viewers were reached in 1996 with Giacomo Puccini's *La Bohème* and in 1997 with Giuseppe Verdi's *Don Carlos*. In 2002, ROH Education and Immersive Education developed the interactive opera software in2arts based on Benjamin Britten's *Peter Grimes*. Through *Peter Grimes*, secondary school children learn about opera in an interactive way. They are invited to recreate Peter Grimes or to create their own opera. A mini-site linked to the part of ROH Education on the website gives more background information about *Peter Grimes* and the in2arts application for the users.

In order to meet the challenge to bring as many British citizens as possible in contact with ballet and opera, the department started with the project, *On the Road*. This was an outreach project based on building long-term relationships with communities in

selected areas throughout the country inspiring an interest in singing and music making, dance, design and the theatre arts.

On an international level ROH Education played an important role in the foundation of RESEO, the European Network of Education Departments in Opera Houses. The house organised the first informal meeting in 1996 and acted as founding member in 1998.

III.1.5.2 Educational mission

The Royal Opera House has a commitment to education, defined in its widest sense as *'the process through which we can contribute to the lifelong learning, creative and artistic development of people, both in the wider society and within the organization. ROH education mandate to set a standard of education work in the performing arts which represents and contributes to best practice nationally and internationally; to make the resources of the Royal Opera House more widely available, ensuring that performances for young audiences and work created and performed by children and young people are an integral part of the organization and to involve ROH artists and staff as widely as possible within the education programme, including opportunities for continuing professional development'* (ROH [online] 2006).

ROH Education translated this mandate into the following aims:

- To introduce new and diverse audiences, including children and young people, to performances both at ROH and beyond Covent Garden.
- To enable people to participate in, create and understand, music, dance, design and all the elements that combine to make opera and ballet.
- To provide opportunities to explore the working practice and production processes of ROH.
- To provide learning opportunities that enable people to better appreciate and appraise music and dance generally and the work of ROH in particular.

(report ROH Education to ROH main board July 2005)

To reach a diverse audience and to give this audience the opportunity to take part in creative experiences and learning activities is central to the department's work and links in with the current policy on culture as mentioned earlier in this section.

III.1.5.3 Structure: Place of education in the company

Royal Opera House has an opera and ballet department, as well as a full orchestra. Each department has his directorate. The Chief Executive is the general manager of all departments and reports back to the board of trustees. ROH Education is part of the department 'Education and Access' (figure 5a). The department groups Education & Learning activities, Front of House Management and the Archive. The head of the department is a member of the senior board and has as such a close relationship with the colleagues of the other audience related departments. Compared to the other case studies in this research the place of Education within ROH is rather exceptional at the moment.

Fig. 6a: Place of Education within the ROH (ROH [online] 2006).

Within the department (see figure 6b) a deputy is assisting the director. Compared to for instance case studies 2, 4 and 5 all aspects are integrated in the ROH in one department. Ballet, Opera and the Orchestra have their own education manager.

Education & Access

Director	Deputy director	Ballet Education Manager Opera Education Manager Orchestra Education Manager Insight Programme Manager Education Administrator On the Road Co-ordinator Hamlyn Project Manager 2 education officers Education Events Assistant Junior Education Assistant Artist in Education

Fig. 6b: Structure ROH Education (ROH [online] 2006).

For specific activities co-ordinators and managers are appointed, as is the case for projects such as:

- the *Insight*-programme; both full days and evenings introducing operas and dance-pieces to the participants.
- the *Hamlyn*-project; performances at very low ticket prices to enable those that would normally not do it, to attend the ROH. Education organises pre-performance work for these performances.
- the *On the Road* programme started in 2005: to introduce opera and ballet to as many people as possible the ROH established an initiative throughout the country involving practical workshops.

III.1.5.4 Education programme

ROH education work can be broadly subdivided in two main areas (table 5): work linked with 'audience development' based on inspiring new people and giving a more in-depth view on the ROH programme to the existing audience, and on the other hand work contributing to the 'development of the artform' through training of artists and developing new work.

Table 5: Base-lines of the ROH Education programme (ROH [online] 2006).

ROYAL OPERA EDUCATION PROGRAMME
Audience Development
Access for new audiences - 'inspiring'. Work aiming to introduce newcomers to the Royal Opera House's artforms, repertoire and artists.
Insight for existing audiences - 'discovering'. Work aiming to inform and provide greater insight into ballet and opera for our existing audience
Artform Development
Nurturing artistic talent - 'enabling'. Work aiming to develop artistic skills or to contribute to the training of artists.
Exploring the artforms - 'developing'. Work exploring the artforms, pushing artistic boundaries and posing fundamental questions about the lyric arts.

The base-lines mentioned in table 5 are translated in the following current projects of ROH education which include: opera and ballet demonstrations for schools, colleges, hospitals and youth groups throughout the UK; annual courses for young people (16 to 21) giving them the chance to discover the life behind the scenes; study days and informative evenings about the repertoire of ROH; practical courses and projects with adults (including special training courses for teachers); courses for young people at school, community centres and at the opera house; major productions involving young people in the creation of a dance – or music-theatre performance; projects designed to foster creative work in composition and choreography and the production of resources including packs for theatres and materials for newcomers to opera and ballet. Furthermore there are the collaborations with a range of other organisations in and outside the UK.

The individual projects within the education programme have different emphases; most encompass aspects of at least two of these emphases, some contribute to all four (ROH Education Report to ROH main board July 2005):

- Work to introduce newcomers to the house, the art or the artists of the ROH: the Paul Hamlyn performances, school matinees.

- Work strongly focussing on practical involvement in music, song, dance or design: Chance to Dance, Turtle Opera, Rhythm in Motion.

P
h
oto3: young people performing, with deaf translation© ROH Education

- Work with the primary focus on making new art and exploring the artistic and the production process: Gentle Giant, Creative Teachers, Write an Opera
- Work with an emphasis on developing critical faculties such as appreciating art and making aesthetic judgements: The Insight Programme

ROH education's reach can be summarised by 'direct' and 'indirect' outreach, whilst the department tries to make the best value from its resources by working with projects with a multiplier effect such as the *Write an Opera* project that trains teachers to help their pupils to set up a music-theatre production in their schools. Thus the project has a direct reach for 2004/05 of 30 teachers and an indirect reach of 3,070 pupils. Directly (table 6a) ROH education reached 65,126 people in 2004/2005 compared to 54,376 in 2003/2004.

Table 6a: Direct reach ROH Education programme by Audience type (ROH education Report to ROH main board July 2005).

Direct reach ROH Education programme by Audience type: figures dd. July 2005		
	2003/2004	**2004/2005**
Adults - Core Audience	9,628	8,840 (1)
Adults - New to the house	1,826	6,635
Artists 'training' - artists in South Africa, graduate musicians	0	165
Children of School age taking part outside school hours	341	395
Excluded Groups, i.e. Disablility	26	34
Families	0	1,324
General Open Access	9,93	14,198
Students in school	9,677	18,787
Students over 18	201	391
Teachers	7,581	9,308 (2)
Creative Voices South Africa	15,166	5,049 (3)
Total	**54,376**	**65,126**

(1) The Insight audience has remained static, but the allocation of the Insight audiences has been refined with audiences allocated to New to the House or Families when appropriate.
(2) This increase is primarily due to 8 School Matinees during the year 2004-2005 instead of 4 the previous one.
(3) The Creative Voices S A is separate from the other Education activities. The total reach of this project is consistent (about 23,000) yearly, but the project has been restructured decreasing the direct reach of the project.

Indirectly the house reached 104,815 people in 2004/2005 compared to 76,558 in 2003/2004. The increase can be found in the new *On the Road*-programme and the fact that 8 instead of 4 School Matinees took place in 2004/2005.

Table 6 b: Reach Wider Access Programme ROH Education 2003-2005 (ROH education Report to ROH main board July 2005)

Reach Wider Access Programme		
	2003/2004	**2004/2005**
open rehearsals	38,212	35,745
floral dance	3,62	3,423
big screen relays	29,91	21,55
hamlyn performances	6,147	7,654
back stage tours	12,343	14,276
free lunchtime concerts	5,914	5,985
firsts (ROH2)	1,579	2,034
travelex applications and tickets (1)	N/A	50,549
radio relays	1,600,000	2,400,000
tv relays	2,500,00	3,500,000
Total	**4,197,725**	**6,040,332**

(1) Travelex £10 student = last minute system for students of unsold tickets

The Wider Access programme (table 6b) involves the television and radio relays. The open rehearsals and the big screen relays are open to everyone passing by at

Covent Garden piazza, and reached more than 4 million in 2003/2004, and over 6 million in 2004/2005.

III.1.6 Education narrative

The interview took place on the 7th of November 2005 at the office of the interviewee. In the narrative she will be referred at as "A". The interviewee is Director of Education and Access. She has worked at the department since 1987 where she was the previous Ballet Education Officer. She became head of the department in 1999.

Personal context

"A"'s father worked in mathematics and with computers. He was interested in arts, although he came from a musical family. His father was a professional musician and made violins in a later stage of his life. '*My father came from a rather large family of six'* tells "A", *'and was considered to be less talented musically than the other members of the family. So he was always getting the worse violin and he felt always very strongly about that. He loved classical music, but didn't particularly care for opera'.*

"A"'s mother did not work, but she was very artistic in every way. Though it was not through her mother, but through her mother's sister that "A" got involved in the arts, because she more or less educated "A" until she went to school. '*My earliest memories are of her playing the piano and me clapping out little tunes and singing and dancing'* says "A*".* Important to note here is that "A" stressed that to her '*being involved in the arts and being involved in learning were not separate. One learned to read, one learned to sing and one learned to dance, and it was all fantastic fun'.* This was exactly the opposite of how this was perceived at school, because there ("A" attended a grammar school) it was made clear to "A" that these things were not meant to be fun.

It is interesting to note here that "A" added explicitly that the interest and the love for the arts came through her family background and not through school.

First contacts with Opera

Her first visit to the opera took place when "A" was about the age of six or seven. Her mother and her aunt took her to see an opera of Richard Wagner, not immediately a work that would be at the top of the list for someone who is attending opera for the first time. So it might have turned "A" off, but it did not. "A" loved it. She explains this as follows: '*There was always music on at home, so it did not seem strange musically and the kind of scale just blew me away. I thought it was wonderful'*. It was the overall experience, of being at the Opera House, the costumes, the set design and the singers on stage that made her love it. With this first experience "A" illustrates that, as does the theme mentioned on first experiences in the literature and in the pilot study (Johnson 2002:116; Laenen 2003:11), even a work seen as difficult and complex by the experts in opera does not necessarily need to be difficult for someone who does not know opera, because that person does not have the same reference scheme.

But although that first performance was a success, "A" felt more attracted to Ballet, just because she seemed to like dancers more than singers. After grammar school "A" studied to become a dancer. When her professional dancing career (1964-1972) at the Royal Ballet ended she went to University to study Psychology. "A" started to do further research and then went into teaching. She became a schoolteacher at primary stage so taught everything and really enjoyed that. The place of the arts in her teaching received every year a more demanding space. '*I felt that that was the way that some of them who were not progressing well academically otherwise could suddenly find confidence in themselves'* explains "A". So the music, dance and drama work were at the heart of her teaching.

Working at the education department of the Royal Opera House

"A" was teaching for about eight years when one of the principal singers at the Royal Opera House, told her that the post of ballet education officer was vacant and that he thought she was the one for the job. After some hesitation "A" applied for the post and got the job. "A" worked alongside the opera education officer.

To situate the structure of the education department at that time one has to go back to the 1970s.The first Education Officer initially started in 1976 and was brought in to run the schools matinees (Opera and Ballet). He left around 1980 and two years later in 1982 a Ballet Education officer was appointed. That person was responsible for both the Royal Ballet and Sadler's Wells Royal Ballet at the time. A year later (1983) the opera education was started. When "A" arrived in 1987 she replaced the Ballet person. *It was always one department* says "A"*, but we started having quite separate bodies of work initially.* This did not last very long, because quite quickly certain aspects of the work began to merge. There was on the one hand 'opera' and at the other hand 'ballet', two different disciplines taking place in the same House and on an educational level with the same basic philosophy of sharing the work with a diverse audience, not just introducing it but also offering the opportunity to 'take part' in it. "A" gives the following example to illustrate the merge:

> *For instance we ran a course for 16 to 18 year olds and that was sort of a general view of the Royal Opera House (ROH). So it represented both ballet and opera within that. And that was, I suppose the first thing we did across artforms.*

She *clarifies that it was about bringing together people and opera and ballet and enabling people to explore, benefit from, contribute to the work*. "A" continues by saying that *they never felt that it was just us here with opera, introducing it, but much more that it was a two-way process*.

Over the years it has become more and more 'one department' using the strengths of the House having two companies and their own orchestra. As can be learned from the current structure of the department, each artform still has its manager, but there are also integrated activities bringing opera, ballet and orchestra together (see table 6b). This offers the best circumstances to the different audiences wanting to discover these artforms.

"A" continues her thoughts about her work by pointing out that it may not be the department's intention to *assume that what they do is right and is set in stone and that we are just going to impose it on people.* But she is aware of the fact that the British taxpayer is heavily funding ROH (the House get the highest allowance of all cultural institutions in Britain and received extra funding in 1999 for a wider Education & Access programme; see ROH Snapshot pp. 69-70) so she sees it as her and the department's duty to make people aware of the work at ROH.

For "A" it is therefore important *to offer the wider audience an opportunity to experience whether it is interesting for them. And to make the organisation aware of what people in the wider world are thinking about opera and ROH.* This is, she thinks, essential for them to do. Important to note here is that "A" stresses that in doing this kind of work, one should be honest with oneself and with this wider audience, because she concludes by saying *it would be wrong for us to pretend to be something we are not.* She adds that it would not be right for the department to put on a circus workshop just because it would entertain people and they would enjoy it, since circus is not ROH's core business. *Other organisations can do that better* "A" continues *we have to concentrate on opera and ballet and show that this also can be fun and enjoyable, and as such stay 'true' to work.*

Here "A" recognises a possible tension might occur between the philosophy of the Education Department and other parts of the House, since any organisation that needs to raise sponsorship might try to present a picture of itself being 'special' and 'exclusive' which is the opposite of an 'Opera for all'. There is no tension in terms of personal or professional argument at ROH since she is part of the senior executive

board now (see table 6 a), which facilitates a mutual respect and understanding for each other's work. But "A" thinks there might be conflicts in organisations where they are forced to bring in 80% or more of their income from individual donors, rich people and sponsors. It is difficult to tally the work for these beneficiaries with going out to work in a disadvantaged area with young people. Therefore "A" believes that '*it is not something an education department can do on its own, but that it is the organisation as a whole which has to say: ok how do we embrace all these different needs that we have'.*

Changing ideas

"A" moved very quickly from thinking it was enough to give people a one off experience, to seeing that really the only sensible and cost effective way to work was to build programmes rather than projects that were just set up and then died. So more and more now the department has very large programmes of work that continue. And those are very often developed in partnership with other people, other organisations, particular areas of the country and addressing a need or a gap in provision otherwise. She gives the example of the *Turtle Opera* to illustrate this thought:

> *When we established 'turtle opera', work we do with young people with autism, we worked with another organisation which is specialised in disability work and we felt that there was very little provision for young people with autism to work with the arts and actually, that's going on for a few years now and the provision has increased. So actually we are looking if we have to continue that project, because other people are doing it now.*

So it is a matter of being aware of what is going on in society and always asking is ROH education the best and most appropriate to deliver this work, whatever it is? The danger of education work is that you can do almost anything and you could justify almost anything. "A" feels strongly that one always has to relate back to its organisation and to the artform and see what the need is and what one can offer that

is helpful. An opera company is not there to deliver healthcare or formal education, or rehabilitation. It may contribute to that but that is not its primary purpose.

Challenges and changes

Through the interview it became clear that to "A" change had in many ways to do with projects. So when in the future artists performing within education are going to be ROH artists and no longer freelance artists, this is going to have strong implications both for the education department and the ROH. They are already using ROH artists in projects at the moment, but since there are relatively few artists that feel confident and are skilled to work in education, ROH Education still works a lot with freelance artists.

On the one hand "A" is more than happy to work with freelance artists, on the other hand she explains problems associated with this. For example children attending the opera or the ballet performance they were working on in class, might be disappointed in not seeing the artist they know form the work in their class. So in the future "A" would like to invest more time in the training of artists. But she realises that *working with in-house artists is tricky, not because they do not want to contribute, but because they have very precious schedules.* Planning within the three departments of the ROH is quite different so it seems. In general the orchestra works almost a year ahead in time and they can really have a lot of flexibility in negotiating. The opera company is quite flexible too, but from the ballet company, the department does not know how the rehearsal schedule will be until a week before. So according to "A" *one of the department's major considerations is getting ROH artists involved in the work, finding ways so that they can do that.*

The situation of the department within the opera house

This brings the interview to the place of the department within the opera house. The link with the company nowadays is very strong. This is quite different from how it used to be.

Certainly in the early days the education department had a very low profile. The people in the department were doing their job, but were not concerned about their profile within the organisation. "A" is convinced of the fact that lots of people inside as well as outside the Opera House did not know the department existed. Most of the work was out rather than in the House, thus very few people in the House had an idea of what the Education Officers were doing. But now there is a balance. The department works more in the House now than before the reopening of the ROH in 1999, simply because the adult program is much bigger than it was before (eg. the insight programme) and because activities and performances in the two new theatres: the Linbury Theatre and the Clore studio, are now integrated in the Education programme.

"A" illustrates the department's higher profile in the organisation as follows: *'The Chief Executive sends a newsletter around with information with what we are doing. There is the magazine sent to schools and going to different departments. We involve as many people as we can from the opera house within the work. And that is not just artists. It is also people who work in the music library, in the armoury, with props, work in the wardrobe and because I'm part of the executive team, which offers an opportunity not only to talk about education, but to feed information into wider thinking about opera and ballet'.*

Thus in house the work is now seen in a more reflective mode whereas before it was just assumed, which is underpinned by the fact that education and learning is at the heart of the company's mission statement. "A" concludes by saying that '*today the department is at a place where it will drive. It is a big team, they are skilled, and they have the huge support from the Chief Executive and the organisation'.*

The educational work in relation to the wider cultural context

When asked how "A" saw her work in relation to the wider cultural context she starts by saying: '*It sounds very conceited but actually a lot of the major changes at*

present in British education for the Arts are kind of following what we have here in thinking about the work'. She develops this notion by explaining '*that there is a much stronger emphasis on creativity, which was always at the heart of ROH education work'*.

The question is though whether this did not gradually interweave with one another, because since the 1970s the British view on culture and education did evolve more and more to a participatory and creativity driven policy (see pp. 72-73); as well as the growing demand on working in partnerships.

There is a very strong emphasis on working in partnerships and on sustainable work rather than just one-off. As well as on trying to work together to give better provision says A. She raises the example of the Music Manifesto which is very much looking to say to all music led organisations how they can all make their individual contributions that are different from each other and so will give a complete provision for young people. This is another link between policy demand and "A"'s philosophy of education work, she defines as being really important for the future. *Institutions should not replicate, but aim to bring what is distinctive about their organisation.*

Future perspectives

Future perspectives are according to "A" linked with 'interdisciplinary arts'. There are lots of discussions within RESEO (the European Network of Education Departments in Opera) about bringing in dancers. This has not been initiated by "A" though she sees it as a trend.

> *I think people have realised that simply separating out the artforms, the way in some schools the music teacher never talks to the drama teacher and that, you know, is not healthy and is not the way real life works. And I think that is quite a strong trend and we are certainly very much in support of that.*

The trend is not only noticeable at RESEO conferences, it is also present at British governmental and educational level. The Department for Education and Skills and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport have held a number of joint conferences looking at creativity and the importance of creativity for young people. Schools are also starting see that it is not enough to teach the basics, that creativity plays an important part too in learning and that 'cross-art'- projects are a good way of getting pupils creatively involved.

According to this "A" believes that '*there is a sort of backlash now as we went from more art centred to really emphasizing the basics. I think we now are swinging back towards creativity and more arts experience for young people'.*

As for the department, the big challenges for the future seemed to be based on the development of artists and particularly working with organisations that train artists and musicians on the one hand and the development of work that is appropriate and interesting for a new or young audience. "A" cannot imagine the department would just continue doing work on the repertoire such as *La Traviata* for instance. '*That would be disastrous for the future*' says "A". ROH education produces new work for young people separately from the rest of the House. "A" believes that this should be integrated in the House:

> *We found out when we produced Babettes Feast it was very much produced by us in education and when it came back for a second time, the opera company produced it. I think that is good and healthy. And we hope that The Gentle Giant will go the same route. The ideal is that there will be that expertise to produce this kind of things in the opera company so that it is not the education department who has to do it, but at the moment there isn't, so we do it.*

"A" reflects that all her adult life she wanted to be involved in the two things that make opera education. One is taking the artform forward and the second is enabling as many people as possible to benefit from the Arts. Not just to introduce people but

to say lets be part of it, let's use it to grow and develop and create. And that has been evident through bringing up her own children, her teaching, all the jobs she has had.

III.1.7 Education narrative in context

"A"'s personal background had a major impact on the way "A" perceives opera education. She experienced the arts as a child as something playful and full of fun. Her personal experience seems to have driven her throughout her career first as a teacher then as education officer and finally as director of the department. It is remarkable that it was not school, but her family background that influenced her most. One might conclude that if the art experience within the family had not been so strong, she might have given up her interest when at grammar school. This underpins what is written about the importance of cultural capital as far as family background and social class are concerned (Bourdieu 1979a and b; Reay 2004), "A" comes from a middle-class family background, and arts activities were present throughout her childhood. What her story shows is that through her aunt she became passionate about the Arts, not through school. Thus at the same time this reflection offers another view on the impact of school on the development of this cultural capital. As much as the school can have a positive influence on a pupil's interest in the Arts (Bourdieu 1969; Haegenaers 2002), the institution may also have a negative influence on his/her interest for the Arts. When "A" attended, school was still very academic and theory based, and as she said *Arts was not supposed to be fun*. In those days the arts were taught as the other courses in an academic and theoretical way rather than in a more practical and student-based way. This clearly did not seem to have had the same impact as the way "A"'s family approached the arts, since when she started working as an opera education practitioner at the Royal Opera House she believed that opening up the artform to people involved more than just introducing it, but also to be able to take part in it, benefit from it and also contribute to it (pp. 82). This belief did not realy alter over the years, though changes withn the opera house and in policy resulted in different choices and focuses throughout "A"'s career.

Her views and beliefs seem to match more with the view of the Labour party on arts (pp. 70-71). At the end of the interview she highlighted that it was interesting to see that what was now at the forefront of cultural policy (re) acted on what education was doing at ROH for the past few years: partnerships, creativity and inclusiveness. Here one could ask who influenced who, because the UK has a long tradition of education and the arts in cultural institutions. It seems that at certain stages in time the work at the Opera House inspired the policy, see for instance the report on the arts in schools in 1982 (p.80). The education department started a year later, but certain forms outreach work already started after the Second World War and continued to be present (pp. 79-81). But the opera house the place of the education department and the visibility of the work changed a lot after the reopening of the restored opera house in 1999. The department moved over to the main building, and became in charge of the access programme for adults, whereas before its work was more concentrated on teachers, schools and young people. The theatre received more funding but therefore needed to develop programmes to open up the House to a wider audience programme. So the scope of the work enlarged. And the climate changed, because that same year (1999) the PAT 10 (Policy Action Team 10) raised the profile of the Arts and Sports in an inclusive way, which evolved to the start of a whole range of access programmes funded by the government such as the Creative Partnerships, Youth Music, the Music Manifesto and the new audiences programme. This raised the profile of the Arts in Arts Organisations. It also created dynamism in the field of arts education, because compared to 1999, there are at present many more players in the field, due to the change in political climate and due to programmes such as *Creative Partnerships* and the *Music Manifesto*. These changes had an influence on programme choices ROH Education, since as "A" explains one constantly has to reflect on one's place in society in order to be able to enrich the cultural provision for people rather than create overlap, it also offers the possibility to see what people today think about Opera according to "A" although it is not clear how far this has influence on both the House and the work at ROH Education. What is clear is that the perception of the work of the Opera House has changed a lot since "A" started. At present the director of the department is a member of the senior board and is according to "A" at a place

where ROH Education can drive (p. 94), but she wants it even more integrated in the house in the sense that they want to work more with in-house artists, which seems to be another big challenge for the future for both the department and the rest of the house. According to "A" this might result in the fact that the artform in itself moves forward. Whether this will be the fact, is difficult to say. It would be interesting to see though if projects such as *Babette's Feast* and *A Gentle Giant* will change aspects of the artform in the future but to do this one would need to conduct an impact study in the future.