Organizing creativity
- A case study of the film production company
Rainbow Circle Films in
Cape Town, South Africa

A study in the field of Organization
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**Preface**

How can we create high quality film with limited resources that transforms our society? Has it got to do with our attitude to learning and how we organize creativity? These questions were my starting point for this study. The film media has grown all over the world and it has an ability to reach out to far more people than those who have access to the cinema or television today. For me, film is just as much an expression of art as it is a reflection or creator of life. It could serve as a tool to inform, transform, revalue, inspire, document, observe, prove, examine or reconstruct our reality and fantasy. The documentary is the genre that has triggered my interest from the very beginning. The thin line between observing and creating, and the discussions around the subjectivity of the sender, gives the genre a special nerve that raises questions.

Meeting with the filmmakers in Rainbow Circle Films (referred to as RCF) in South Africa and experiencing their genuine motivation to transform their society through the making of film made me realize what it was that had excited my interest for the film media from the very beginning. The possibility of expressing oneself by using pictures and sound to create and reveal opinions, values, questions and art that make the receiver react and revalue their own mental-models.

Rainbow Circle Films, Martina della Togna and Vaughan Giose, have generously opened up the door to their company and organization as well as their home to let me take part of, study and learn from their work and daily life. They have contributed to my motivation, inspiration and knowledge as a filmmaker and human being. Our discussions and late night talks have raised many new questions and opened up my eyes to the complexity of the world.

Unfortunately there is no room for the long list of “thank you” I would like to write, but I think most people who have contributed to this study knows how grateful I am. Though, I would like to direct a special thanks to…

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Head of the Film production program: Lars Dahlquist – thank you for believing in my ideas and for motivating and helping me to realize them.
Summary
This is a study within the field of organization that is built upon a case study of the film production company Rainbow Circle Films, based in Cape Town, South Africa. My experiences from working with the filmmakers in the company, when producing four documentary films, called the “Ikon-showcase”, is the focus in this study. My intention is to look at aspects of the organization that mainly concerns creativity and learning.

I have worked on three specific themes: “Identity and the feeling-of-belonging”, “Communication and leadership” and “Transformation and strategy”. By concentrating on the themes and applying theories within the field of organization that concerns disciplines, such as “system-thinking”, “shared visions”, “team learning” and “mental-models” I identify skills that could possibly be important when “organizing creativity” and building a “learning organization”. I discuss and analyze how the organization’s actions, expressions and skills connect to the themes and disciplines and what effect it has on the organizations creativity and learning.

The conclusions, from observing RCF and analysing how the themes manifest themselves in the organization, shows that RCF practice the disciplines to a great extent and that RCF has an openness to learning that makes the organization creative. The study does not provide an answer to my questions or a complete picture. My intention is to continue this study by focusing on other aspects of this organization’s internal- and external context.
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1. Introduction
How do we, human beings, organize ourselves to be able to function in our own society? This chain of actions that affects not only myself, but all of us. How do we build an environment where people take responsibility for their actions in a wider perspective, which includes expressing your own thoughts and will as well as listening to others. The research in the field of organization is wide and includes many different aspects, for example learning, transformation, complexity, knowledge, time-perspective, decision-making, communication and leadership etc. These are all ingredients in an organization, no matter how big or small, or where in this world this organization of people is operating. We are all a part of ”the organization of the world”, but at the same time we all have different pictures of reality.
This essay is a study in the field of organization that focuses on the film industry. The film industry has always been “a world of it’s own” and few studies have been done on the organization that lies behind a film production. Organizing a film production is often a conflict between the freedom and creativity of art and the limitation of the financial resources. Because of this conflict every organization within the art of filmmaking operates under difficult circumstances. Many of these organizations focus on organizing their financial resources. But few of them seem to put resources into the development of their organization in terms of creating a learning environment that can build the platform for creativity. My interest for this conflict and questions around creativity and learning grew after working with different film-, commercial- and television productions. When I met the filmmakers in the film production company Rainbow Circle Films (referred to as RCF) I got interested in the way they had built and developed their organization and network. It seemed to me that they had an exceptionally strong vision and inspiring approach to learning and creativity. The company RCF is based in Cape Town, South Africa and during autumn 2003 I got the opportunity to go and make a casestudy of their ongoing production. This study is based on my experiences and analysis from working with the filmmakers in RCF. By studying RCF’s organization and the organizational theories in the literature I have analyzed and identified connections between the practical actions and the theories.

The study discusses three groups of themes that I got interested in when working with RCF. The themes can be looked upon as conclusions that identify fields that are especially important when analysing the creativity in RCF’s organization. The disciplines, that constitute the theories, I use as “analysing glasses” to look at RCF through the researcher’s perspective. Looking at RCF and the themes through the glasses of the disciplines raised questions around...
creativity and learning. I decided to connect the conclusions, of the identified themes, to the
disciplines in the theories and develop the discussion around the connections to learning and
creativity. These connections and discussions lead to the final conclusions presented in this
study.

1.1 Film and media production

For more than hundred years the art of filmmaking has fascinated us, and it is a growing
industry in many parts the world. Today there is also a growing interest for how we can
organize the production to reach a high artistic quality at the same time as we lower the costs
for the production. What we often tend to miss out on is that the organization consists of
human beings. Therefore it is of great importance, when it comes to the content and quality of
the film, to work consciously on the structures that motivate the teammembers to reach their
personal and mutual goals. If we do not organize for creativity, we will have less chance to
end up with the artistic result that we had hoped for.

The different aspects of our being that you come across in the study of organizations and
organizing is in fact what film is about, both in terms of the content and production. Film is a
way of exploring who we are as human beings and the camera lens has been used as the eye
of the viewer, or from the point of view of a character to look at the world from different
perspectives or realities. Film has its own magic. We analyse its characters and forms inside
and out to look at the structure and development of the film and we try to figure out the
characters personalities. We do the same in reality, but the difference is that there is no play-
and stop button to press. The filmmaker creates his or her visions and thoughts, which
become a part of the filmmaker’s personal search for identity. On the other hand the audience
reflect and search for identification in the film, which can inspire them in their own search
for identity. Film reflects the way we have organized the world and the way we look at
reality, which also makes the filmmaker subjective. Therefore, the media of film and
television reflects for example political movements and serves as a tool to create opposition.

The people producing the film are an organization, which is a part of the “organized world”.
To be able to reach the organization’s goals, we need to question ourselves and the actions
we take – the created actions and structures will constitute the organization. In filmmaking
we talk a lot about artistic creativity and to create time, space and financial resources to be
able to work creatively. But, how do we organize creativity? Could there be other elements,
except for time and money that are more important for the growth of creativity? There are
different purposes of producing film. The industrial production that has its main distribution
channels at the cinema often produces entertainment film for a commercial and financial
purpose. The structure of an organization in the industrial film production can be compared
to any industry producing products for a commercial market. They structure and plan for
effectiveness in the production process to be able to make the highest profit possible. Then
there are film production companies whose main purpose is to work on the content and
message in the film. This requires structure, planning and financial resources, but the
difference is that the purpose is to serve the content of the film and to let the organization be
guided by the form of the film. In other words the organizing of the production is more
flexible and formed according to the content and purpose of the film. While in the industrial
production the organizing of the production is strictly according to an economic model and
schedule.

1.2 Three themes
While studying ”organization” and ”organizing” you come across different aspects of our
being, for example in the fields of behavioural science, sociology, history, culture, art and
economy etc. When a group of people organizes themselves to accomplish a certain goal, we
use the word organization to identify the group. This group of people, with their “different
pictures of reality”, are going to work for a mutual goal. This means that those people
involved has to deal with exactly the same problems as they do as members of ”the
organization of the world”, but in a more focused way. Getting these mind-sets and chains-of-
thoughts together to build a learning and creative environment is the organizations mission in
every moment, it is a combination of gravity and play.

By using the themes “identity and the feeling-of-belonging”, “communication and
leadership” and “strategy and transformation”, the actions that reflect the organization’s
fundamental attitude to learning and developing the organization, their network and industry
are being discussed. I got interested in these themes when working with the filmmakers in
RCF. Many of their films deal with questions around identity, communication and
transformation. Their films and their organization are closely connected, as a united whole.
Their films reflect the values and the mutual goals that the organization seems to be built up
on. The leadership and the strategies they practiced, as well as the feeling-of-belonging
among its members, seemed to be a result of their values and goals. The structure and
strategy that was created to accomplish their productions were adjusted according to the
content and purpose of the film. The identified themes are used as research tools to get an
understanding for different aspects that could have an important impact on the organization’s
creativity and learning. For the organization to be able to use the full capacity and work for a
mutual goal, it requires that every member contribute to build a learning environment. The
themes are a part of the system in the organization and they mutually affect each other. To be
able to realize a mutual goal or to transform the organization and the structure in the society
where the organization operates, it requires that the organization build a leadership, strategy
and communication that creates a feeling-of-belonging and identification among its members.

One of the most important aspects to consider when organizing creativity is the relationship
between creativity and learning. Could it be that creativity is a result that comes out of a
learning environment? There is no technical instrument to measure how capable an
organization is of creating learning and development. We can look at results or for example
products to try and measure the quality. But how can we measure if the members of an
organization feel motivated to fulfil a mutual goal? Are they using their resources and energy
in the best way? Learning is an ongoing process that includes the whole organisation. This
study identifies some of the elements that are important for an organization to be able to
succeed in creating learning, creativity and development. The way an organization looks at
the importance of creating a learning environment says something fundamental about their
attitude when it comes to for example leadership, strategy, feeling-of-belonging and
communication. How can you as a leader create a platform for learning? How can your
strategy support learning and create a feeling-of-belonging among the members in the
organization?

These themes are not new in terms of fields of study, but they are not frequently discussed in
the organization of filmmaking. Therefore this study wants to contribute to the development
and transformation of the organization in the film industry by starting to look at different
fields within the organization and practicing a “new vocabulary”. Using new expressions and
a different vocabulary sometimes throw light upon new fields and perspectives of the
organization that is necessary when starting a transformation. The experiences, themes and
theories in this study could generate new kinds of questions that start processes of
transformation in the organization of filmmaking.
In the chapter “Discussions and analysis”, the themes will be discussed and connected to the disciplines within the field of “learning and organization” that constitute the main theories in this study. In these discussions I have put on “the glasses of the researcher” behind the theories, to analyse RCF and the themes.

1.3 Rainbow Circle Films – company history
After working for several years as producers and directors for different production companies and training institutions Martina della Togna and Vaughan Giose decided to found the video production company Rainbow Circle Films. In 1998 they started out in the townships area around Cape Flats in Cape Town, South Africa. They set up their office at home in Elsies River, mainly because they wanted to support the infrastructure in the townships. Since then they have gradually invested in filming equipment and edit facilities to be able to work independently. Before they started the company Vaughan had worked as cameraman, editor, documentary director and producer and Martina as project manager, director, producer and journalist. Now days they are both filming and producing.

The company is built up on a strong network of local, national and international filmmakers. Their stories come from local and national filmmakers who strongly believe in the importance of telling their stories for their own people. To be able to show their films to the local audience they have for example established a local film festival. RCF describes their company mission as: “RCF is committed to the production of films that tell contemporary African stories for a local and international audience. RCF uses a variety of media platforms to facilitate cultural exchange, interaction and international co-operation”.

RCF has combined a diverse portfolio of video production work and their documentary films has been selected for screening at a number of local and international film festivals. During the last two years they have produced two packages of documentary films for television, called the “Ikon-showcase”. The first Ikon-showcase started out as a co-production between RCF and the Swedish Television, and for the second showcase RCF got funding from the South African Broadcaster, SABC (further details, see chapter 5). Martina and Vaughan both have a wide experience from working with training and development. For example designing and implementing video production training courses and working with crews and filmmakers in developing themselves through the making of film. This has translated into an ongoing commitment to create opportunities for new directors and crew. By supporting new
filmmakers and building an infrastructure they hope to create a platform for new independent film companies to start growing. In the presentation of their company RCF writes about equity, empowerment and transformation: "Our company policy and practice is to where possible create development, training and job opportunities for emerging filmmakers, particularly township based crew. Our belief is that in strengthening our network we are building the future of the industry and contributing towards its transformation. We have worked with first time directors and have been able to provide the production expertise to create fruitful and qualitative experiences and products".

2. Purpose and definition
The film production process of the second "Ikon-showcase" is the focus in this case study. The purpose is to study how the organization “organizes creativity” and how “the attitude to learning” in the organisation could have an impact when creating a motivating and creative atmosphere. The key questions in the discussions and analysis are “What constitutes a “learning organization?”” and “How can we “organize creativity”?”. When focusing on RCF the discussions concerns for example how the theories about the “learning organization” can be applicable to RCF’s organization and how RCF “organize creativity”.

The study focuses on three themes: "leadership and communication”, “the feeling-of-belonging and identity” and "transformation and strategy”. The purpose is to study how these themes connect to one another, how they are related to “the art of learning” and how the connection between these elements could affect the organization’s creativity.
Since the themes are wide and the study focuses on creativity and learning that exists in intermediate relations between the members of the organization, certain aspects that could affect the organization had to be left out. For example detailed financial aspects, in a wider external context, that could have an impact on the organization’s creativity and learning.

3. Method
The theories referred to within the field of Organization are mainly Peter M. Senge´s theories about what he calls “the learning organization”. His theories are built up on a number of, what Senge calls “disciplines”. In this study the disciplines are being connected to the themes to analyze RCF’s organization and discuss the key questions. Other organizational theories are
being used to complement and give a wider perspective, for example Henry Mintzberg’s theories about “the entrepreneurial organization”.

By using the method case study I got the possibility to experience the concepts “creativity and learning” in a new environment, which gave me concrete examples to relate to the theories. In “Praktikfallsmetodik” by Bengt Kjellén and Sten Söderman, the method of case studying is discussed (Kjellén och Söderman: 1980). Kjellén and Söderman talk about the tendency of abstraction that exists within the research that mainly concerns humans and society. The reason for this abstraction being more or less inevitable is probably because of the long traditional way of studying science. Kjellén and Söderman discusses the strength of the method of case-studying “Ofta kan ett välskrivet praktikfall där man får möta verkliga människor, stämningar och situationer vara ett bättre sätt att förmedla kunskap på än en uppsättning aldrig så stringenta hypoteser, även om de är i verbal form och inte av matematisk eller logisk typ”1(Kjellén, Söderman: 1980: 29)

The method that is used to accomplish the case study is based on Husserl’s and Silverman’s phenomenological theories that are being discussed in the book “Tolkning och reflektion” (Alvesson, Sköldberg: 1994: 95). By practicing a participating observation and taking an active part in the daily work I got closer to the actions, relations and values that existed in the organization. My initial point was that it is not possible to be a present observer without affecting the process and I wanted to base my observations on the concrete everyday life, which is already filled with for example expressions, values and intentions. All observations are in this sense subjective and everything that is being observed is filtered through the observer’s life experience. I searched for a method that was open to the concrete experience and the subjective actor’s understanding of society through “being there”, taking part and interacting. I found that Husserl’s phenomenological perspective (Alvesson, Sköldberg:1994: 96) and Silverman’s theory “the Actor’s point of view” (Alvesson, Sköldberg:1994:101) was actually the method I was practicing. In phenomenology the “lived experience” is in focus. The human being is the actor and creator of society and transforms, modifies and changes its social meaning. The phenomenological perspective and “the actor’s” point of view influence all my method, empiric and theoretical discussions. An important point is that there is no

1 “A well written case-study where you get to meet real people, feelings and situations can often be a better way of sharing knowledge then a set of stringent hypothesis, even if they are in a verbal form and not of a mathematical or logical type”.

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“one-way traffic” between the researcher and his or her study-object. They constantly and mutually affect each other throughout the process.

The experiences and observations from the case study of RCF is the focus in this study. For two months I worked closely together with the producers and filmmakers in the organization. I interacted in the daily work by assisting the producer and following the filmmakers in their work. In my capacity as a student I did not have the responsibility for the production, and therefore I could observe the ongoing process to a greater extent.

To get as many experiences and impressions as possible of the organization, I decided to collect a wide material during the time for the case study. I chose not to define my main question and research area in advance, but to work on certain themes and questions. On location, when researching and observing I noticed what interested me about the organization and the themes, and I was able to dig deeper into certain questions. The openness towards the collection of material was positive in terms of keeping my eyes open for experiences and impressions, but difficult in terms of not really being able to focus on one specific question. Every evening I wrote down my experience and I transformed my short notes from my notebook, who served as my “second memory” during the day, into a more understandable context. My notes included all kinds of impressions I got from meeting with people, taking part in the situations and relations that occurred and experiencing the atmosphere. I kept my own daily notes on a separate sheet from the notes I wrote regarding what theories to apply. I did not want to let them affect each other before I had an opinion about what kind of connection they could have. The notes and material soon became a large quantity to handle and lots of interesting tracks made it even more difficult to choose direction, but I kept coming back to the concepts “creativity and learning”. The daily work and conversations replaced the interviews I had prepared before leaving. My concrete experience and the interaction between the people became a lot more relevant than the interview questions. But, being one of the members of the team also made it difficult to step out, mentally, to observe our actions from a different or distant perspective.

I spent a lot of working- and spare time together with the filmmakers, which gave me a lot more understanding for underlying values, living conditions, opinions and intentions. The experiences supported my choice of theories, for example the application of Peter M.Senge’s discipline “system thinking” (Senge: 1990: 20). The theories I refer to have served as a tool
to discuss different themes, dimensions, questions, problems and possible reasons. I have applied the theories to see if and how they correspond to the examples from my case study. I also had a lot of interesting conversations with people living in my neighbourhood. All of the filmmakers and the people I met gave me new perspectives and raised questions that I had never been confronted with before. I had to critically reflect upon my own thoughts, reflections, understanding and experiences. The knowledge I got made me realize how little we know about the world and the human being. “The more we see, the less we know”, is a well-known expression. It occurred to me that there was no way I could come to any conclusions in my research. It was a whole new world and society I was facing and I did not know anything about the history, society and living conditions existing in this society. Suddenly my exercise seemed out of reach and I felt it was impossible to think or come to a conclusion about anything that I saw – actually I knew nothing about the world they were living in. Although, after a long period of thinking and reflecting I came to the conclusion that since we all have the same limitations because of our backgrounds and life experiences the only way of learning is to study, revalue, reflect, discuss and express our thoughts and conclusions. All individual experiences, observations and insights about the world and how our societies functions should contribute to a wider system thinking and understanding of how all the elements are linked together.

4. Reflection

4.1 Definitions of concepts – discussion and problems

There is one problem built-in every research or study. It is the fact that we cannot, as an observer and researcher, take of our glasses and look at the world from an objective point-of-view. Even if we would try to put ourselves in somebody else’s shoes, we always carry our own bag of experiences and values. What we choose to discuss and the arguments we use are subjective. When experiencing a new culture and society, there are different stages of understanding and knowledge that we have to go through that will give different levels of insight and understanding. But no one can give himself out as knowing what the situation is like for anybody else. When experiencing a new environment, one might not be able to define and analyze the underlying structures or the negative or positive side of a situation. But notes and analysis always say something about the situation or structure and the conclusions can add interesting and relevant aspects.
A problem that has been specific for this study is the definition of the concepts, on which the study focuses. The questions “How can we organize creativity?” and “What is a learning organization?” naturally include the problems about how to define creativity, organizing and learning. The definition of “creativity” in the Swedish dictionary (Norstedts förlag: 1999) is “the capability of delivering new ideas and accomplishing them”. The definition of an “organization” is “a larger, co-ordinated group with a certain goal” and the definition of “organizing” is “establishing a system by planning and arranging”. In other words the accomplishing phase of creativity, per definition, includes organizing. Often, especially in the field of art, “creativity” is defined as something free and independent, as an opposite to the word “organizing”. What seems to be forgotten is that they depend on each other. Creativity could be defined as a phenomenon that occurs in relations between individuals, as an inspiring and motivating atmosphere. With this definition it is difficult to find a concrete plan for how to reach this special atmosphere. To define creativity partly as planning for concrete actions of what needs to be accomplished within a certain time is easier. But why do we separate these two definitions? The concrete structure establishes the platform that the atmosphere of creativity is built upon. Therefore the platform can work as a positive generator or a negative limitation. In the field of art we tend to forget about this link between organizing and creativity. Maybe it is because we do not speak about organizing as something that includes considering feelings, motivation and inspiration as important ingredients when planning.

Creativity has a strong connection even to the concept “learning”. To accomplish an idea you need to gain knowledge and skills that will lead you to the goal. This process of learning has to be taken in account when planning for a goal. There are no measuring instruments for complex concepts like creativity and learning. The definition of creativity is vague, but we seem to be able to define a creative and learning environment when we experience one. Therefore it is possible that there are certain ingredients that a creative environment possesses. It is interesting to look at the process of filmmaking and how creativity always had an important and mysterious place in the creation of art. The organization that organizes the filmmaking process has to build the structure for a creative environment and atmosphere to grow. But then again – what characteristics define a creative and learning environment? How can we plan and arrange so that creativity can grow? Or, what if creativity has its own life that we cannot affect by making room, time and platforms for this mysterious atmosphere and concept to appear.
5. Background to the case study of Rainbow Circle Films

The film production company RCF is based in Cape Town, South Africa. During autumn 2003 I stayed in Cape Town to study the organization of RCF and to work together with the filmmakers and producers when producing four documentary films, called the Ikon-showcase, and the Molweni Film festival.

In year 2001 RCF started to work on a project in co-operation with the Swedish Television, Film i Väst and the Swedish Film Institute. The project was a Swedish concept for a television series called ”Ikon”. This program consisted of a mixture of short documentary films with a personal touch that could be interesting to try to implement in the South African television to give black filmmakers a voice in the white dominated television. RCF started to work on the concept and in year 2002 they finished their first documentary showcase. The showcase was screened at national and international film festivals, for example Sithengi International Film festival in Cape Town, South Africa and Gothenburg International Film festival in Sweden. The showcase was very well received and they got to develop a second one during year 2003, this time in co-operation with SABC (South African Broadcasting). The second showcase was the production RCF produced when I did my case study of the company during autumn 2003.

I first got in contact with the company in year 2001, when two of the filmmakers in RCF's organization came to Film i Väst in Sweden to show their films. When I met the filmmakers from RCF I felt like they had developed many of the skills that, in my opinion, had been forgotten in today’s organizations and certainly in the film industry. They were driven by something much more important than themselves. The way they analysed society and talked about what is needed in the future was very honest, sharp and with a lot of hope. After making contact with the producers for RCF, Martina della Togna and Vaughan Giose, we started to plan for an exchange of knowledge and experiences in filmmaking. Martina came to visit Sweden and later I went to Cape Town during the time for the first Ikon-showcase. What fascinated me was, among other things, how RCF managed to create such strong films without hardly any resources. To compare, the total state funding for making film in South Africa was almost equal to what one Swedish feature film consumes. RCF had a unique energy that seemed to drive all of the members in their organization and network. They wanted to make film that told stories for their own people and they had a genuine
entrepreneurial approach that came from some kind of creative energy and spirit. I got interested in what it was that made them hold on to their conviction of being able to transform society by making film. After making some research I understood that there was something in their organization and network that created this spirit, creativity and urge to learn and transform. They seemed to get energy and power from the conviction that “our actions create our own reality” – in other words the influence that each one of us have on our own reality. The presence of this conviction in their discussions and dialogs made me realize what it was that I had been missing when working with organizations and film production companies – the presence of, what Senge calls, a “shared vision” and a “higher purpose”. My curiosity made me go back and study RCF’s organization for a longer period of time, while producing the second Ikon-showcase. I wanted to learn from their way of working and analyze the underlying forces that seemed to drive the people in their organization and network.

6. Daily notes – an overview
The following notes will give an overview of the environment, daily work and activity in RCF and their network. For those who want to start by reading through the daily notes, references to chapter 7 “Discussion and analysis” are put down in the text to connect the examples from the notes to the discussion and analysis. For those who want to go directly to chapter 7, references to the daily notes are currently put down in the discussion and analysis to show upon their connection to the notes.

6.1 Introduction and description of location
Arriving at Cape Town airport on the 19th of September 2003, a bit sleepy after a long flight. It has been a year of e-mail correspondence, trying to follow what has happened since we last saw each other. Last time was in Sweden, during the Gothenburg Film festival and the screening of the first Ikon-showcase. RCF have succeeded to get financing and distribution for a second Ikon-showcase from the South African Broadcasting, which is an important step for the whole company and network. I am exited to hear what has happened so far and to take part in the process of making these four documentaries for the second Ikon-showcase. Martina and her assistant Colleen come to meet me at the airport. ”Welcome in the chaos!” Martina says with a smile. I feel very pleased to see her again and we start immediately to speak about the ongoing chaos in the production. Martina explains the last days of correspondence with funders, directors, team members and distributors. Somehow, the first
feeling that strikes me is some kind of confidence and security. It is as if Martina’s attitude to the chaos she is explaining express that “this is how life goes” and that this stage is just another possibility to learn. Then we head for home in Elsies River to meet Vaughan and their three small boys. Martina, Vaughan and their children lives in one of the townships, called Elsies River, on the Cape Flats outside Cape Town. Some of the areas in the township consists of small houses, but most of the townships are settlements of chags, made of whatever you can find on the street to make a roof or wall from. Martina and Vaughan live in a small house that serves both as home and office for Rainbow Circle Films. Their facilities, like a computer and a car to get around, is necessary to organize a company in production as well as a family. But this is something that is very rare among the people living in the townships. Many of the filmmakers in RCF’s network cannot afford a car and since the local communications are very bad and dangerous, Martina and Vaughan are usually coordinating the transports.

The townships are a result of the apartheid regime that ruled the country. Black people were put into ghettos outside the town centre and were forbidden to enter the centre, if it was not for working reasons. Today the people in the townships are still terribly poor and the level of crime and drug abuse is the highest in the world. There is hardly no infrastructure, most people are unemployed and have never gotten a chance to go to school or any other education. The children are playing in the rubbish and dirt on the streets and most of their destinies will end up in gang fighting, drugs and crime. There is nothing for the young people to do in the townships, no playgrounds, recreation centres, restaurants or cinemas. When people firstly have to struggle for their basic needs everyday and secondly never gets the chance of being exposed to the possibility of doing something else in life, but going into crime - how can they be motivated to choose a different path? To be able to transform the Southafrrican society the young people need people to relate to, who can show them that there are other ways of expressing themselves where their identity and story is the most important resource. By showing their films to the people in the townships, RCF opens up new ways of using your freedom-of-speech and focusing your energy.

The first days I stayed at Martina and Vaughan’s place in Elsies River. I was excited and pleased to be back in their warm, welcoming, chaotic and hectic daily life in the township. From their small veranda you can see the Table Mountain watching over town and the Cape Flats. The nature surrounding the Cape Flats is astonishing and the presence of the two oceans crossing each other’s movements at the Cape Point creates a spiritual atmosphere.
Small minibuses drive like crazy through the heavy traffic and small streets. They are the public transport for most people in the township. It is not safe, but at least better than taking the bus or the train, where you are in a huge risk to get robbed. When the night falls the complete darkness takes over, except for some small lights in the chags and the small houses around. The dogs bark in the backyards and it is not unusual to hear a gunshot, or two. You ask yourself how it is possible that this beautiful country, so rich of nature resources and spiritual people could be broken down into such poverty and humiliation. But many people are positive about the future and the ongoing transformation, even though they have a long way to go.

Martina and Vaughan had started to plan for the shooting of the Ikon-films already in July. One of the shootings was about to start in a week’s time, so I jumped right into the production phase. At the same time they were editing a video for the Local Government that they had produced. It was an information- and presentation video of a community project where the community had invested in building roads in one of the townships. The video was to be used for presentation of the project to other communities for implementation. Since I wanted to work closely together with Martina and Vaughan, to experience what it was like for them to organize the daily work of RCF and the co-operation between the filmmakers, I decided to find a place to stay close to where Martina and Vaughan were staying. It turned out not to be so easy since there are hardly no hotels in these areas, except for one where “the gangsters usually hang out”, as Vaughan once told me. Martina and Vaughan were very concerned about finding a secure place for me to stay. It is of great importance that you know the areas around. You have to know exactly what streets to walk on, or not, in the townships. Finally we found a nice family, not far from Elsies River, where I could rent a small apartment. The first weeks Martina and Vaughan came to pick me up in the morning and dropped me off after our long hours of work. Step by step I learned how to get around with the minibuses so that I could make my way to RCF’s office and town on my own. I really enjoyed experiencing the daily life. But I would never have managed without Martina and Vaughan watching over me. I was often following Martina or Vaughan to pick up the three boys after school and having dinner together with the family. Wonderful evenings and interesting discussions made me learn more and more about the South African society, the film industry, filmmaking and Martina’s and Vaughan’s visions and plans. I also started to follow some of the other filmmakers, Brenda Davis and John Friedricks, in their production of a fiction-documentary and a television production. Brenda had taken on
the production manager job for the first time and John, who is usually a scriptwriter and
director, did his first job as a producer. Other projects that were under development were for
example a documentary, by a filmmaker named Kurt Orderson. A story about the slaves that
came to South Africa from Jamaica. Vaughan and Brenda were also shooting a video at
Robben Island where the political prisoners were kept during the apartheid years. The
prisoners were interviewed in the prison at Robben Island and Vaughan and Brenda were
filming to document their stories at this reunion.

I spent two and a half month together with the filmmakers in RCF and their network. During
this time I feel like I learned more about the world than I had in my life so far. The following
chapter is an abstract from my notes during this time. It is primarily notes that will serve as
references to my discussions in the analyze chapter. But it also serves as a dairy to be able to
give a chronological description of what happened.

6.2 Daily notes from Cape Town, 20th of September to 17th of November 2003
20 of September

After a day of catching-up and planning for the coming months and the productions I was
about to study, I went with Martina and Vaughan to a wedding. One of their friends was to
get married and Vaughan was going to film the wedding. It was a lot of fun to meet their
Rasta friends. The wedding was held in a big hall in a township nearby. Vaughan filmed the
whole procedure, for his friend to keep as a wedding gift. It was interesting to experience a
traditional Christian wedding where half of the people were Rasta’s. But marriage across
different religions and cultures is not as unusual as it seem to be across different colours.
South Africa has after all eleven official languages and lots of different religions that are
influenced by all the different cultures represented among the population.

21 of September

(referring to chapter 7.2.2 The search for identity, 7.2.3 Teamlearning)
I read the synopsis for the documentaries that constitute the package of the second Ikon-
showcase. The length of the films will be 12 minutes each. The directors and titles are:
"Blood Roots” by Martina della Togna, “Yu Chin Chan Club” by Vaughan Giose, ”Fighting
for Jesus” by Beverly Mitchel and ”Grumpies” by John Friedricks. I also red through the
presentation of a documentary, “Mission to Barbados” directed by Kurt Orderson, that RCF
is developing in co-operation with the director. The stories are all very strong and personal.
The political history of the country, how it has affected the destiny and life of the characters
in the film, as well as themes like for example identity play a central role in the films (referring to chapter 7.2.2). The fact that these stories are personal, not just in terms of the form and genre, but also for the filmmakers themselves, makes the production very authentic. There are many pieces to be put together to reach a mutual goal both artistically, economically, politically, socially and personally. Artistically, the package has to keep a high level of quality in terms of for example script, director’s adaptation, camera work and editing. Among other reasons, to create an interest in the industry and to be able to get further funding and distribution, in other words to be artistically accepted in the monopoly position that certain distributors and fonder possess. The unique quality in their stories, they already have. But to get the people in the "white film industry" to modify their structure and to see the capacity of small filmproduction companies from the township, take a lot of work for the pioneers. Economically, RCF has a very narrow budget for the production and they have already invested in almost half of the budget themselves in terms of financial capital, salaries and equipment. So far they have not yet got any money from their fonder and distributor SABC (South African Broadcasting), and they are still waiting for the contract to arrive. For RCF to survive and to be able to take on new productions in the future they have to keep strict to the budget and get the proportional rights back in the distribution. This situation makes it impossible for RCF to, for example give the rights to the directors of the films in the package. This is something that they will be able to share in the next step, if producing for example longer versions of these short films. Politically and socially RC want to create transformation, in terms of infrastructure in the townships and also in the industry where they operate. This is a long-term goal, but to reach it they have to be very strict and conscious of each step that they take when negotiating and co-operating with different people, institutions and organizations involved. Nevertheless personally, they have to protect their personal stories. Morally, the stories are personally attached and they belong to the filmmakers and his or her characters. Therefore these stories could not be owned by anyone but those who have made them and RCF would never give away all the rights to the distributor. In terms of rights shared between the filmmakers and RCF it is important that everyone agrees that it is for their own best that they make a mutual venture where they uses RCF as an asset to enter the film industry so that they will have a chance of getting funding for new productions. This means that they cannot share the rights for this production, but the filmmaker’s investment could be counted into the next possible production. This agreement turned out to be a lot more difficult. Everyone thought they were on the same journey and had the same opinion about the question of rights, until now when they are about to start
shooting the first film. One of the directors, Beverly, has started to question the agreement about the rights for their productions. Because of their lack of experience in situations like this, they had not written any contracts regarding the rights between the filmmakers and RCF.

At this very moment Martina and Vaughan are in a heavy conflict with the director and the shooting of the film has already begun. They might have to postpone the postproduction until the contract from SABC has arrived and to try to solve the conflict.

Something that also made Martina very upset was that the director had fired the guy who was doing the light in her production. Firstly Martina was upset about the fact that the director had not consulted with her as being the producer and having the overall responsibility for the team. Also, Martina got upset about the director firing one of the few black professional people in lighting. "It is of great importance that we support our brothers and sisters if we want to transform our society and the industry”, Martina said.

22 of September
(refering to chapter 7. 2.3 Teamlearning and 7.4.2 Learning through transformation)
In the morning Martina, Vaughan and I went to a meeting with the production manager at the Local Government to show the video of the community project that RCF has produced. The project includes planning, organizing and implementing a construction of roads in one of the so-called “homelands”, the areas outside town where black people were forced to live during the apartheid years. RCF has followed the project with the camera and interviewed the people in charge of the project. Martina and Vaughan have documented several projects similar to this one to use as information-, presentation- or instruction films. In this case the film’s main purpose was to show other Local governments how this project worked and spread the project to other communities in South Africa. They discussed what part of the interviews and shots that would serve the purpose of the film in the best way. Listening to their dialog around the film and the experiences from working with other similar projects gave me an understanding for the different dimensions of RCF’s work. I think Martina and Vaughan added a lot of value through their perspective, both as filmmakers and in person with their history and values as members of today’s South African society. They are both very sharp at analysing political statements and they have an ability to see a person’s underlying values that reveals their intention. Even if RCF’s main activity is to produce documentaries
for television and would like to develop in film, they are very engaged in the transformation of society and they use their resources to contribute to the development.

We are driving around in the minibus, picking up things and doing some errands while in town. Martina is driving and speaking on the mobile trying to coordinate all the meetings and arrangements for the coming days. In between her phone calls she discusses with Vaughan what needs to be done in terms of for example preparations for shooting, technical support, strategies, as well as where to take the kids for the weekend. Their production meetings almost always take place in the bus driving around fixing, arranging and picking up people. At the moment the discussions are focused on the near future and strategies around what to do with the contract with SABC and Beverly’s film.

The conflict regarding Beverly’s film is piling up more each day and it is putting their mutual vision through a real test. The production process for the Ikon-showcase has been going on since June. In June the contract regarding financing and legal rights where supposed to arrive from SABC. But, the contract has not showed up yet and RCF have been forced to start the production of Beverly’s film ”Fighting for Jesus” with their own financing. Because of the time it takes to produce a drama-documentary genre and Beverly’s and RCF’s match of their time schedule, RCF had to start the production before the contract from SABC arrived. Because of RCF not knowing what their contract and rights in relation to SABC are going to look like, they cannot sign a contract with Beverly. This puts them in a very uncomfortable and dangerous situation (referring to chapter 7.2.3). Since SABC is the main fonder together with RCF and also the distributor, RCF has to make the deal regarding rights with them in the first place. Beverly has claimed that she wants the rights to her film. This is something that RCF and Beverly have been discussing in the beginning of this project and that RCF thought they had agreed on in terms of not being able to give her for this film. From RCF’s point of view they had been discussing the idea of the film together with Beverly and then decided, together with Beverly, to produce it by RCF for the Ikon-showcase. Then suddenly Beverly wants to claim her rights and they cannot even find a win-win solution between themselves and Beverly because of the lack of contract from SABC. Today Martina and Vaughan know nothing about what is going on at the shooting location and there is no communication between them and the director for the moment. This situation taxes on RCF’s and Beverly’s relationship and that is a direct threat for the quality of the film. If the conflict
cannot be solved it will have a negative effect on the final result and the strength of the network of independent filmmakers trying to enter the industry.

24 of September  
(referring to chapter 7.2.3 Teamlearning and chapter 7.2.5 The uniting force of the shared vision is stronger than the separating force of a conflict, 7.4.2 Learning through transformation)

Martina, Vaughan and Beverly had a meeting regarding contracts and rights for Beverly’s film. Beverly had claimed her rights to the film she was directing in the showcase. It was almost as if she ment that she was producing the film in her own company. Martina had given Beverly the responsibility for her production budget, so that Beverly could put together the team according to whom she wanted to work with. But RCF were still the producers of Beverly’s film and all the rights and ”go-ahead control“ should have gone via the producing company. The problem was that they had never written any contract regarding the rights for the film. The conversations on the phone had been quite tough so the meeting was a bit tensed. Martina and Vaughan had a list of things that they wanted to discuss at this meeting. The frustration and the overhanging problem with SABC that was affecting the whole showcase, put RCF in a situation where they were almost about to lift out Beverly’s film and quit their future co-operation. At least they had to stop the post-production immediately. Economically they could not afford to drive the production any further before the money from SABC had arrived. And personally they were disappointed that the director did not seem to share RCF’s goal and strategy of creating a strong company with a mutual vision, economically and artistically that could reach their long-term goal of transforming the film industry.

Martina and Vaughan were bubbling inside when we started the meeting but it was difficult to get down to the problem. Beverly on the other hand never seemed to stop talking about things that did not seem to have anything to do with the problem even though she knew what they had to discuss. It suddenly seemed like both parties, when sitting down face to face could not hold on to their anger and conviction of leaving their commitment because of a conflict. There was something, even though the conflict was obvious, that made them realize that they had to listen and explain to each other how they looked at the situation and what their suggestions were. Neither one of them wanted this conflict. Martina and Vaughan explained the problem with the contract from SABC and it seemed like Beverly finally started to understand the difficult position that RCF was dealing with. After talking about the content of
the film and the shooting process that Beverly had been working on the last couple of days, Martina and Vaughan seemed to get back into the spirit of filming this story and you could feel that their intention of finding a win-win solution for both parties grew stronger. The meeting did not solve the conflict, but at least there was a level of mutual understanding that showed upon a strong vision that was shared by both parties and a conviction that this story had to be told to celebrate their people (referring to chapter 7.2.5). It was also a motivation for RCF to learn and search for deeper information about what rights and musts you have as an independent company in relation to a television broadcaster and financier, as well as a director or independent producer (referring to chapter 7.2 3).

28 of September
When driving around in the townships you notice the absence of public entertainmen. Vaughan told me, when passing one of the main streets that there had been a cinema there once, when he was a child, but they closed it down because the tickets were too expensive for the township people. Instead they started to build up huge complex and shopping malls in town where the cinemas were moved. Of course the people in the townships who could not afford to take the bus into town, had even less opportunity to go to the movie. The places in the townships, where the cinemas had been, turned into, for example churches. “I guess there was a more urgent need to pray, then it was to go to the movie at that time”, Vaughan says with a comic undertone.

30 of September
(referring to chapter 7.4.2 Learning through transformation)
Martina and I went to a meeting at the South African Script Writers Association (SASWA). Martina was invited to show RCF’s first showcase and to talk about how they worked with the scripts and production process. RCF are in many ways going in the opposite direction to the mainstream when it comes to using certain structures and tools for filmmaking. For RCF, film is more about “shooting from the hip” instead of planning and structuring the script in detail. It is more about filming what is happening instead of trying to direct the documentary and making up the situations. Most of the scriptwriters at SASWA seemed to work mainly with the, so called ”three act – structure” when writing a fiction script, and even for documentary they seemed more into scriptstructures. They discussed the importance of having a well developed script even when shooting a documentary. When Martina told them how RCF had been working from a treatment and more like “shooting from the hip” to get as close to
authenticity as possible, they were surprised that she, as a producer, dared to work with such a loose structure. The films that were chosen for the Ikon-showcase were presented on half a page. Everybody from SASWA apprighicated the showcase a lot, but they seemed to have their own thoughts about the underlying structure in the script. Martina ment that the best way of learning is to experiment and develop your own personal form and expression before implementing certain structures, like for example the three act – structure. The scriptwriters at SASWA seemed to think in the opposite direction, which means that they were convinced that it is of great importance to learn the three act – structure before starting to experiment in your own form.

SASWA is quite a wellknown organisation and consists of scriptwriters from the industry. In some way it seemed like SASWA looked at themselves as those who came from the big establishment and had the experience of filmmaking. It was like as if they did not want to see that a different way of working could be possible and useful as a method. As an independent company you are often looked upon as “an alternative” to the mainstream industry, instead of something that the mainstream industri could absorb and learn from. Of course the independent filmmakers could get usefull tools from the mainstream aswell. It is a balance between getting new input to your own way of filming, but not buying a concept. Martina listened to their arguments about the three-act structure, but I noticed her disapointment over the narrow-minded way of thinking in the industry. The positive thing is that this kind of situations just seems to strengthen RCF’s motivation to continue changing the mind of the industry.

An interesting discussion the scriptwriters at SASWA raised was the need to develop a contract regarding intellectual rights for the scriptwriter. I was surprised that this was not a rutin in the industry. In some way it shows that the big institutions in the industry is in a stage of developement and that the smaller companies, like RCF, has in some ways learned faster than the institutions has been able to transform.

2 of October

Today Vaughan and Martina finished the editing of the video for the Local Government. What is left is to put down the voice over. When they had showed the last adjustments for the project managers they were very satisfied. The project has been going on since April, so now Martina and Vaughan had planned to concentrate on the Ikon-showcase. But, today another work opportunity has come up. Martina got an offer to go to the Eastern Cape to work on a research project in a rural district. Martina is very interested in the idea of the project and
she is considering moving there to work for some weeks. If so, she will edit her film “Blood Roots” while working with the research report. Vaughan has to take over the practical coordination of the Ikon-production and the Molweni Film festival as well as shooting his interview with his father for his film “Yu Chi Chan Club”. This means that he will have a hectic schedule, but there is also an economical reason for Martina to take on the project. So far RCF has not got any funding for the films, so everything is financed from their own pockets.

There is a lot to be done and even I wonder how all the plans are going to fit together. But Martina and Vaughan seem calm and they take one day and step at the time. Martina has a piece of paper put up on the wall beside her desk. It serves as their calendar for the next month and she is constantly cutting and pasting deadlines, shooting days, editing days, mixing and sound, and packaging of the showcase as well as planning for the Molweni festival and Vaughan’s shooting at Robben Island. During most of this time, Martina will be in the Eastern Cape so it is very important that Vaughan agrees on this schedule and co-ordinates all the practical details. This time Vaughan will take on a lot of the producing job.

3 of October
(referring to chapter 7.2.3 Teamlearning)
A contract from SABC arrived today. The contract looked like some kind of standard document and it was not adjusted to a co-production situation. From what I understood the history of co-producing between the television broadcaster, who has had quite a monopoly for a long time, and small independent companies has neither been long or fruitful. Many years of corruption and political antagonism have put traces in SABC’s organisation that still keeps them in the same structure. This contract was obviously not made for a co-production. SABC wanted the production to be owned by SABC exclusively, even though they were not financing more than half of the production. There was in other words no understanding for the importance of building new strong independent companies that can contribute to the wealth of South African film industry. How did they think that RCF would be able to finance a production without getting anything back in the distribution? And the fact that they had not considered the moral aspect of the situation made RCF very disappointed. These kinds of personal stories cannot be owned by anyone else then the person or the company who has experienced them. It seemed like SABC had not considered the possibility of a co-production contract that could be positive for both parties – a contract that for example was based upon how much each company put in to the production.
Martina and Vaughan have to take this in their own hands and they are now trying to look at different possibilities to send a new proposal to SABC. They will definitely refuse to sign anything that is not a fair deal. I think this situation shows upon RCF’s strength and that they have a unique and genuine will to develop and transform structures to find new solutions. Even if they are small in comparison to the big companies and institutions, they are not afraid of putting their opinion out there and standing up for what they believe in. They know that they have a lot to learn, but that seems to be a trigger for them (referring to chapter 7.2.3). A problem is that Martina and Vaughan are suppose to make everything happen themselves. They have to run this process at the same time as all the productions are being made. This is the difficulty of being a leader for a company where most of the members are starting to learn about the industry. In these kinds of situations it is almost necessary to have other people with producing skills who can help out. Since they are both filming at the same time as dealing with these questions around contracts and rights, time is just not enough. Martina and Vaughan are now considering taking advice from a lawyer who is specializing in media. But as Martina says they have to find a lawyer with the right approach and the right intentions – something which is not easy in a corrupt society. SABC has a whole department of law to take care of these kinds of questions, which forces RCF to find someone who has special skills in law, film- and media production to be able to solve this situation. The postproduction for Beverly’s film is put on hold for the moment.

7 of October
(referring to chapter 7.2.4 Shared visions and the creative tension)
Some years ago Martina started a video education called CVET. It was a possibility for black filmmakers to be educated in the field of video- and filmmaking. Many of the people connected to RCF’s network have been educated at CVET and new people are now running courses for emerging filmmakers. Today Martina was invited to show RCF’s first Ikon-showcase and to talk about how they work as a company. I joined Martina to visit CVET and to meet the students. RCF seemed to be well known and very appreciated by the students and teachers at CVET. The students that we met went on a 12 weeks introduction course in filmmaking. Martina was a bit surprised that they had put up such short course that included filming and directing their first project. She would rather see that they started out by making a documentary as a first step.
But what seemed to bother Martina the most was that the students could not really explain why they wanted to make film. She felt like something had changed since she left the education. Some of the students focused on a special function, for example photography or directing, and some seemed to think about starting their own company in the future. But they all seemed to have quite vague knowledge about the film industry and what kind of film that is needed in the South African film industry today. The national production of South African feature film is very low. The American film dominates the cinema and makes the public forget about their stories and culture. When the question about “what kind of films the students wanted to make” came up, an interesting discussion started that showed upon a divided opinion around what kind of films are important for the South African film industry to produce. RCF are convinced that it is of great importance to focus on making films that tells stories about the South African people, their past, culture and heritage. It is a step in the healing and transformation process as well as a way of finding new forms and interesting themes for the artistic aspect in filmmaking, both nationally and internationally. If you cannot deal with the past and work for a transformation of society by start telling your own peoples stories, how could you ever be able to heal the wounds and build a better society? Since there is hardly any production and distribution of South African film in South Africa, RCF means that the priority is to develop this platform before they can start producing other kind of stories. By not telling stories of the past you deny your own people. One of the students held that South African film has to stop telling stories about apartheid and “old political problems”. Martina was almost chocked by his statement. The student continued by saying that South African film must reach a bigger market and that market is probably not interested in stories from apartheid.

Through RCF’s experiences they have seen the huge need of telling their own people’s stories and the films have also been a great international success. Martina asked him what kind of films he wanted to make and she tried to discuss with the student why he was denying his own past and people. He tried to get round and he could not really find any strong argument for his statement. I could feel the anger and disappointment from Martina. Her strong reaction to what the student was saying was a genuine proof of how deep and strong RCF’s vision and conviction is. Her engagement for this question showed upon RCF’s purpose to contribute to the transformation of society (referring to chapter 7.2.4). Could it be that the opinions around this question differ among different generations? On the way home Martina expressed that she had thought that the leaders for CVET would have checked the
students intentions of why they want to make film and how they are going to support the black filmmakers.

In the afternoon I met with Kurt, one of the filmmakers in RCF’s network. We had a lot of catching-up to do from last year. He told me about a radio-documentary and the different freelance jobs that he had been working on both as director and photographer. We also spoke a lot about how hard it is to work in the film industry, especially as a black filmmaker and if you cannot afford to go to the best film schools you have to learn by teaching yourself the hard way. But now Kurt is starting to work on a project with support from RCF, “Mission to Barbados”, where he is planning to go to Barbados to find out about his family and heritage. I will try to attend his first shooting at the District Six Museum, where a reunion will take place for the people whose families came over from Jamaica to South Africa. Vaughan is going to shoot and Kurt will interview the people attending the reunion. Maybe somebody knew his grand father or somebody else would find unexpected connections between their families.

Kurt took me to one of the national film schools in Cape Town, called City Varsity. This film school you pay quite a lot per semester to enter and it is mostly white students who can afford it. Kurt and a friend of his had got a chance to borrow an edit suite in the school to do some editing of a concert with the hip-hop-group ”Black Noise” that they had filmed. The film was supposed to be financed by Black Noise, but at this moment they had not got any payment for the job or the material and editing that they had done. In this matter Kurt also expressed his need to develop producing skills if he would manage to survive in the industry. Kurt and his friend seemed to have worked very hard for this production.

8 of October

Spent the day at Martina and Vaughan’s place searching through the video archive of their earlier productions. I watched a film about Rasta’s that Vaughan had made and that had been broadcasted on SABC. There was also a documentary that was filmed and produced by Martina and Vaughan for SABC Development where they showed upon the inhuman living and working conditions for black farm workers. In 1995 Martina made an interesting documentary called ”Community Eyes” that concerned the lack of access to media, information and news for the black people. Other productions made by filmmakers in their network are for example the documentary ”Isibande” by Lungiswa Sithole. The film shows an old traditional ceremony in the African culture when a girl becomes a woman. This was
the film that Lungiswa showed us when I met her in Sweden and that led to my first contact with their network of filmmakers in Cape Town.

By looking through these films I could follow RCF’s history and it gave me an overview of RCF’s production and work. It was like as if a red line went through all of their early and present work.

11 of October
(refering to chapter 7.3.3 Teaching yourself…)

Vaughan is filming a reunion of the ex prisoners at Robben Island. Most of the prisoners have not been there since the prison was shut down, but today they will meet to talk about their life in prison during the apartheid years. The film is ordered from the Robben Island Museum and Vaughan is responsible for the shooting. I would say this is another example of the kind of projects and films that RCF supports. It has to do with the importance of telling and supporting black peoples stories and to take action for a transformation of society.

Today Martina told me that if SABC wants all the rights to the Ikon-showcase, she would replace her and Vaughan’s films with some other films in the showcase. Both Vaughan and Martina’s films tell personal stories about their families that cannot under any circumstances be owned by SABC exclusively. It seems like SABC are not use to independent companies that would be prepared to say “no thanks” to funding because they believe that the story belongs to it’s own people. By being prepared to fight for their rights, RCF creates respect for the independent companies and the black filmmakers in the industry. All of these steps are important to be able to develop and transform the film industry. Cause if the industry does not create new solutions to situations like this there will be no increase of South African film on the market. SABC has to support independent companies to make the national film grow and for themselves not to loose respect, nationally and internationally.

The schedule on the wall in RCF’s office looks more and more hectic and Martina has to make SABC postpone their deadline for delivery of the showcase, since they are the ones who did not send the contract in time – something that has delayed the whole process.

The way RCF operates shows upon their entrepreneurial skills. At this moment Martina and Vaughan work as leaders and producers for a company, production managers, coordinators, directors, editors, runners, scriptwriters, film festival directors, mentors, teachers and parents!
15 of October
To get a wider experience about the productions that the filmmakers in RCF’s network are working on I have started to follow Brenda and John when producing two television productions. They have set up a production office close to town. But there were no phone lines or computer facilities, so from what I have heard they have been going through quite a frustrated time of trying to build up an office. This is the first time for Brenda as production manager as well as for John as producer. Brenda has been more into shooting and John is an experienced scriptwriter and documentary director. Neither one of them had worked with fiction before, so this was a new challenges and experience for both of them. One of the productions they are about to produce is a fiction-documentary called ”Freedom” that John has worked on as scriptwriter together with the woman who is directing the film. John is now the producer together with an executive-producer from the producing and funding television channel ”MNet”.

16 of October
The executive producer for the MNet-production has come to work with John for a couple of days and I attended their production meeting. It is a week left before they are going to start shooting. The executive producer asked who was in charge of the props, the location, the grip and what kind of production insurance they had signed. John, who has always arranged everything himself for his productions and always worked with a very limited budget, said that they had planned to take care of those things themselves and that he had never needed any insurance before. The executive producer looked very surprised that a producer had offered to do all of that himself, but also a bit worried that they would not make it in time since there was lots of producer work that had to be done before the shooting, such as contracting the team members. It was obvious that they had different experiences from models, routines and structures when working. John has never had facilities as computer programs for planning, scheduling and budgeting. He is a genuine documentary filmmaker who has worked together with friends or filmmakers in his network. Usually, the characters in his films are people living on the streets, in the prison and in the rough areas where no one ever gives a damn about signing contracts or keeping deadlines. The executive producer is from the television and fiction system, where planning according to a certain structure is a routine and funding is a definitive condition for making the production happen at all.
A wonderful example of the producer’s different ways of working was when John told the executive producer that the guy that worked as their runner was extremely fast because he used his skateboard as his vehicle to be able to pass the long queues of cars in town. The executive producer was amazed by their creative solutions. I think he started to question his traditional structure. John and the executive producer work very well together and I think they learn a lot from each other.

The other production that John is producing, called ”Ramadan”, is funded by SABC. Brenda will be the production manager for both films and they are going to be shot within the same period of time. Today Brenda and I went to their accountant so that she could show Brenda how to do the bookkeeping and structure the cash flow and payment of salaries and equipment. Brenda felt stressed about all she had to learn in such short time and all the responsibilities for the economy that she had to take on. Since John did not have experiences of dealing with the economical aspects of a production, Brenda did not really have anyone to ask. John is in the same situation, since Brenda did not have the experience either. I was amazed that they were so brave and convinced of learning the skills needed and not giving up even if they could hardly sleep because of their nervousness. Many people would never have payed the prize of learning the hard way. Brenda told me that her passion is the camerawork and shooting, but she has realized she needs the administrative and producing skills. Last year Brenda shot and directed her first documentary ”Gemaakte Hare” that was one of the films in the first Ikon-showcase. John directed one of the other Ikon-films, ”Grumpies”, that will be edited in a different version and included even in this second Ikon-showcase.

Back at RCF’s office Martina told me that she had got a message from SABC that they will withdraw their money if RCF does not sign the contract immediately. SABC claimed that it is RCF’s fault that the process of signing the contract has been delayed. But Martina is determent not to let SABC put stress on them to sign a contract that is not fare for both parties. RCF has the right to analyze SABC’s proposal and so far it has only been a couple of days since the contract arrived.

Vaughan was interviewed by BBC today. They were making a program about black filmmakers in South Africa.

19 of October
I am moving into town for some weeks to stay closer to the Film Commission, where I will work on a research project for an exchange in filmmaking between the filmmakers and companies in RCF’s network and my University in Sweden. The Film Commission is a coordinating organization for production companies coming to Cape Town to shoot film. They are also working with education and development of the South African film industry and working opportunities for black filmmakers in the region. Tomorrow Martina leaves for the Eastern Cape, so I will try to assist Vaughan in his work with the productions and planning for the film festival.

21 of October

(referring to chapter 7.2.4 Shared visions and the creative tension)

Today we had a meeting to organize the Molweni Film festival. Vaughan is coordinator for the festival and some of the filmmakers in RCF’s network are assisting him. There is a lot to be done and everyone has to put in a lot of energy to make the festival possible. The festival screenings will be arranged in three different townships in Cape Town. Because of the lack of public transportation and the danger on the streets in the townships, they have to organize transports for people to come to the festival. It is also difficult to market the festival in the townships. Because of their limited budget they cannot for example print flyers or pay for advertisement. The fact that you need a car to get around and put up the banners makes it even more difficult since Martina and Vaughan are the only ones who have one. So they decided to contact local organizations to make them spread the news and arrange transports. They are also going to try to put up banners in crowdie places in the townships and get a radio advertisement for free. The tickets are free for the township public and neither Vaughan nor the other filmmakers makes any money out of their work. In fact they are all busy with other productions at the same time, so the effort they put into this is based on their free will. So far this festival is the only way for most of the people in the townships to come in contact with film, especially film that tells stories from their own environment. Therefore this festival is of great importance to RCF whose vision is to create possibilities for black people to see and to make film that creates and supports their identity.

22 of October

John and Brenda’s production “Freedom” were shooting one of the reconstruction scenes outside the Goodwood prison. I attended the shooting and spoke to some of the team members and prison guards, who acted as extras in the scene. All the guards were working in
the prison and they told me about the terrible conditions in the prison and how overcrowded it was. The shooting went smooth, but it was quite a sensitive scene. The film is about a woman who was a political prisoner during the apartheid years and this scene was a reconstruction of an interrogation in the prison. The film is mainly a documentary, so the woman was acting herself and that made the situation very emotional.

3 of November
Vaughan went to Johannesburg to meet up with Martina and the lawyer they have engaged for the SABC-case. They will have a meeting at SABC where they will discuss the contract, rights, funding and deadline for the Ikon-showcase. This is a very important meeting for the future of this project and RCF.

5 of November
(referring to chapter 7.2.3 Teamlearning, 7.4.2 Learning through transformation)
Talked to Martina who reported from Johannesburg that the meeting at SABC had finally resulted in a winning solution for both parties. The meeting had been very tensed and unpleasant from the beginning. But Martina, Vaughan and their lawyer had explained their situation and their suggestions of how to solve the problems regarding the rights and suddenly SABC had come to an understanding of why RCF could not agree to certain parts of the contract. When the meeting was over they had gone through the whole contract and the negotiation ended in a win-win solution for both RCF and SABC. A new delivery date was put up and they could expect the last payment from SABC. Martina sounded very relieved and happy.

7 of November
Martina is back in Cape Town for some days and I followed her to a meeting with Beverly today where she explained all about the meeting with SABC and the solutions they had agreed on. Beverly understood the conditions and they agreed on not giving Beverly the rights for this short film, but for the longer version of her film that they are planning. They made a schedule for finalizing the film and postproduction and the meeting ended in a positive spirit and a mutual understanding.

8 of November
(referring to chapter 7.2.2 The search for identity and 7.3.3 Teaching yourself...)

35
I joined Kurt and Vaughan to the District Six Museum, when filming the reunion of people whose relatives once came over to South Africa from Jamaica. It was an emotional reunion for many of the participants and Kurt did several interesting interviews that he will be able to use in his coming documentary “Mission to Barbados”.

10 of November
(referring to chapter 7.2.2 The search for identity and 7.2.3 Teamlearning)
The Molweni Film festival is starting in five days and today the filmmakers are meeting to organize the marketing of the festival and coordinating locations and schedules.

Vaughan is coordinating the festival, and Brenda, Kurt and Lungiswa assist him by taking the responsibility for one screening venue each. The festival has got a budget so that they can pay for telephone and travel costs and for one assistant each to help out.

Their marketing strategy is to put up banners outdoors where the locations, dates and time for the screening are printed. It is very difficult to reach out to the people in the township. Not many people read the newspaper or posters that are put up on the streets. Some people have radios, so that could be a possible way of marketing the festival.

Another problem is to transport people to the venues, since the streets are dangerous. If Molweni cannot organize and inform people that there will be transports leaving from certain venues to the screenings and picking them up to drive them to their doorstep after the screening, no one would dare to take the risk to make their way to the festival. But, if they would arrange for a bus to come and pick up people and drive them home at night, another problem would occur. It would be just as dangerous for the bus driver when driving around dropping people of and few bus drivers would agree to put themselves in that situation.

After discussing the problem back and forth they decided to inform organizations in the township area that could be interested in the festival and who could organize their own transport for their members to come to the screening. The flyers and banners that they had planned to start putting up at public places around the township are delayed from the printing house, so they have to discuss other alternatives to reach out to the public. Lungiswa is thinking of arranging loudspeakers with a microphone to put on the roof of a car and drive around the streets informing people of the screening at the location, on the same day just
before the screening starts. Since many people are at home during daytime they have a good possibility of getting people’s attention. She will try to arrange this, at least for the screening in Guguletu on Saturday.

This festival meeting was held, driving around in the minibus, picking up things and arranging the duties of the day. I like this portable and moving office!

15 of November
(referring to chapter 7.2.2 The search for identity, 7.2.3 Teamlearning and 7.2.4 Shared visions and the creative tension)
This is the day of the Molweni Film festival’s first screening in Guguletu. This township area is completely built up on informal settlements. The people are very poor and most are still illiterate. The screening takes place in a public hall. Vaughan had rented a projector with a screen and loudspeakers that we put up in the middle of the room. We used black plastic bags in front of the windows to make it dark enough to see the pictures on the screen. Some of the filmmakers went into the township to hand out flyers about the screening to people on the streets. Lungiswa had managed to arrange with a minibus with loudspeakers on the roof, so we got into the car and drove around the streets while Lungiswa presented the festival and the films. Not many people in the townships have been to the cinema, so you need to make people interested and curious. One of the films that were going to be screened was a film about the main street of Guguletu, so called NY1. I could notice the curiosity in people’s faces when Lungiswa presented the film in the microphone.

Back at the hall some people had gathered waiting for the screening to start. Unfortunately it was not as many as we had expected, but we hoped for the rumour to spread. While I was standing outside the hall waiting for the screening to start, a woman came out from her house with a hen in her hand and started to cut its throat on the yard where we were standing. No one reacted and it seemed completely normal to everyone around me. But for me it was a new experience.

Most of the themes in the films are related to the politic and history of the country. Many films are very personally attached and bring up important questions. There were people of all ages watching the films. The children seemed excited to look at the moving pictures on the screen and the older people watched with concentration. The people I spoke to told me that
the films had brought up many emotions and memories from the apartheid years and that it is important for them to be able to speak about it and share their thoughts together.

16 of November
(referring to chapter 7.4.2 Learning through transformation)
Vaughan and I were driving in the minibus, going to town. We spoke about life and why the human being needs to work as machines to be able to survive in today’s society. I remember Vaughan saying “You know, I miss the contact we had with the local people living in our neighbourhood. It feels like we have lost contact with many filmmakers, organizations and locals because of all the time and energy it takes to produce and distribute the films to have a chance of surviving and getting into the film industry. I would like to start building up our local network again to get back to the reason why we started. We need to regain the structure in the company - at this point the energy is too divided. The administration and logistics is taking over the time we would like to spend on creating and writing”.

17 of November
(referring to chapter 7.2.2 The search for identity and 7.2.3 Teamlearning)
Today the festival was screening the films in Elsies River, the area where Martina and Vaughan live. The location was in a big hall with a scene where the screen was put up. In the morning when I was there, few people were coming to watch the films. But apparently it was a lot more in the afternoon. After the screening was finished and Vaughan and Kurt had packed all the equipment, we met up in town to chat for a while. The day after tomorrow is the last day of the festival. Kurt is responsible for the screening venue and the marketing of the festival in the area.
7. Discussions and analysis
6.1 The learning organization- introduction and theory

Senge writes about what he calls “the learning organization” (Senge: 1990). Looking at reality as a whole is a basic condition in his theory about “the learning organization”. There is a big difference in looking at reality as a whole or looking at it as fragments that are separated from each other. By looking at it as fragments it is easier to deny responsibility – “everyone is suppose to take care of his or her own piece of fragment”. Looking at reality as a whole means that all these fragments are connected to one another in a system and they all affect each other. In this chain we all have a hundred percent responsibility for our actions. Even though we cannot measure weather an organization can be classified as a learning organization or not, Senge writes about some fundamental disciplines that he thinks are necessary for a learning environment. The disciplines that are being focused on in this study, Senge has named as “teamwork”, “shared visions”, “mentalmodels” and “system-thinking”.

When focusing on the identified themes and how they manifested themselves in the case study, I noticed connections to the disciplines that Senge means create a learning organization. The experience from the case study supported the importance of the existence of the disciplines and showed upon practical examples of what Senge had discussed. By looking at examples from the case study of RCF and how the disciplines play a role in the every day work I discuss the themes below from a learning perspective. For example discussions around how important it is for the organization to learn how to motivate their members to teach themselves. If the organization denies the importance of creating a learning environment for its members, how can the organization expect their members to develop and contribute to the organization? ”Creativity” comes out as a result of a well functioning ”learning organization”. By discussing and looking at RCF and the themes, through the glasses of Senge’s disciplines, this study analys how the assertion above correspond with the practical experiences. Senge’s disciplines are being used as tools to observe RCF’s organization from the perspective of his theories.

The organization that has the ability to take care of people’s commitment to their vision and ambition to learn will according to Senge have a greater possibility of reaching their goals. This means that the organization has to question its own actions and work on a number of “disciplines” that are important for the creation of a learning organization. Many people working in organizations seem to have lost their conviction of the possibility to create a work
or an organization where people constantly develop. Their ability of reaching their goals, developing new expansive ways of thinking, that can inspire people to work for a mutual goal and motivate them to learn, have disappeared when planning for effectiveness in the organization. Senge means that this lack of conviction is a result of the lost of a "higher purpose” in an organization. If the members do not feel that they work for a higher purpose that contributes to the world around the organization, their motivation and inspiration to learn will disappear. Senge writes in his introduction chapter “When you ask people about what it is like to be a part of a great team, what is most striking is the meaningfulness of the experience. People talk about being part of something larger than themselves, of being connected, of being generative.” (Senge: 1990:13). With RCF as an example this study analyzes an expanding organization in terms of how these themes and disciplines play a role in their daily work. By referring to examples of situations, expressions and actions in the chapter “Daily notes” I want to put a light on values that seem to be fundamental for RCF as an organization. In other words the theories are applied on the case study to show how the theories could work in practice.

7.2 Identity and the feeling-of-belonging

7.2.1 Description of the theme, theories and the disciplines "shared visions” and "team learning”

An organizations ability of creating a learning and creative environment depends, according to Senge, on the existence of a number of what he calls disciplines. The organizations "shared vision” and the level of "team learning”, among the members of the organization, are two of the most important disciplines. In this chapter the study focuses on the themes identity and feeling-of-belonging to discuss how these themes have an impact on the organizations way of learning and creating creativity. When analyzing the themes the disciplines were frequently present, which showed upon interesting connections between the themes and the disciplines.

For the organization to build a shared vision, the feeling of belonging among its members is of great importance. The shared vision and the feeling-of-belonging are depending on one another. If the organizations vision is made up separately from the visions of its members, the feeling of belonging and the motivation among the members will suffer. Senge means that the organization’s shared vision has to be based on the personal vision of its members. If every member feels that his or her personal vision is included in the shared vision of the organization and that everyone has the possibility to affect the decisions that are being made,
it is more likely that they will reach their goals. In other words it is not until you feel that your personal vision is included in the vision of your organization that you feel like you belong. This is also the case when talking about peoples search for, and acceptance of, their identity. We all have a need to prove our identity to ourselves and to learn about our identity through the reflection of others. If the process of searching and accepting your identity is something that the organization includes in its shared vision, the members can turn this process into something creative and useful in their work. If the organization does not include and welcome this process, their members will not feel as accepted and important as individuals. Something that will have a negative effect on the organization, for example in terms of lack of motivation. An organization works like a team and they both consist of different individuals who are searching for understanding and respect for their identity among the other members. Because of that, the level of team learning also depends on what role identity and feeling-of belonging gets to play in the team. I want to show upon how the search for your identity can be a uniting force in the shared vision of the organisation and how the feeling-of-belonging play a role when creating motivation and creativity.

Senges talks about team learning almost as a work of art. He describes team learning as “There is commonality of purpose, a shared vision, and understanding of how to complement one another’s efforts. Individuals do not sacrifice their personal interests to the larger teams vision; rather the shared vision becomes an extension of their personal visions.” (Senge: 1990:234). When these ingredients exist and work together, a feeling that one can hardly explain appears – a feeling that we usually call “flow”. This feeling is some kind of proof of a successful composition of a team. But the feeling is hardly ever constant. One can experience flow in a team during a certain period of time. Then suddenly something can come up that makes the whole team divide up in different directions. This is when the existence of a teams shared vision shows, or not. In other words if the team manage to deal with a conflict and still keep the flow and focus on their shared vision. If the team does not look at conflicts and flow as opposites it has a possibility of using the conflict to grow. Senge writes in his theory about team learning “ Contrary to popular myth, great teams are not characterized by an absence of conflict. On the contrary, in my experiences, one of the most reliable indicators of a team that is continually learning is the visible conflict of ideas. In great teams conflict becomes productive. There may, and often will, be conflict around the vision. In fact, the essence of the visioning process lies in the gradual emergence of a shared vision from different personal visions. Even when people share a common vision, they way
have many different ideas about how to achieve that vision. The loftier the vision, the more uncertain we are how it is to be achieved.” (Senge: 1990: 249).

Senge writes about the importance of the shared vision and the existence of a “creative tension”. He means that the most simple and treacherous solution is to let your vision get closer to reality, in other words to lower your ambition with your vision. To keep focus on letting reality get closer to your vision is harder. It takes a lot of courage and energy to develop those skills, but with that approach you will reach further and get closer to the higher purpose of your existence. It is the human beings wish to let ones reality get closer to ones vision. But because of certain structures in society we are wrapped up in limited chains-of-thoughts and we are not being trained to think differently.

The connections between searching for an identity, a feeling-of-belonging, and the disciplines ”shared visions” and ”team learning” shows upon how they depend on each other to create a learning and creative environment. Senges theories manifest themselves in different ways in RCF’s organization. I will in the next part discuss how the disciplines ”shared vision and team learning” connects to the themes ”identity and feeling-of-belonging” in RCF’s organization.

7.2.2 The search for identity through the media of film

Learning is not only about knowledge in a practical sense. It could also be a process of finding, creating and transforming your identity. Film is a way, for the filmmaker as well as for the audience, of getting to know yourself, your culture and heritage. RCF’s films shows in many ways upon the filmmakers’ processes of finding identity, which in it self is a never-ending process of learning. To find strength in your own identity and to see that you are capable of learning is often necessary to convince yourself to face the risks that come along with new challenges.

By motivating black filmmakers to use the camera as a tool to look for their heritage and identity, RCF takes action for, what Senges writes about as “a higher purpose” of their organization – to contribute to the transformation of the South African society. Together with a number of experienced and non-experienced filmmakers RCF develops film projects with themes that are not often being discussed in the media. In South Africa there are hardly no South African films in the cinema distribution and if there is, it is not stories from the black
peoples point of view. The transformation of society will not be possible if the people do not get a possibility to discuss and share their history. RCF’s films play an important role in this aspect. By choosing personal stories that tells about the black peoples history and culture, RCF creates a platform for their people to find and to appreciate their own identity. During years of oppression the black people were forced to deny their own culture. Therefore it is of great importance to create organizations where feeling-of-belonging motivates their members to search and stand up for their identity.

When looking through RCF’s projects, “identity” is a theme that is frequently coming back. For example in the documentaries RCF produced for the Ikon-showcase (referring to chapter 6.2, the 21 of September). Martina’s film “Blood Roots” is a personal story about her family, their heritage and background. In the film Martina search for her identity and roots by following family members and linking their different stories together.

Vaughan made a film about his father who was one of the leaders for the organization “Yu Chin Chan Club” who fought against the apartheid regime. By interviewing his father, Vaughan could document his father’s life story as well as his own, and the story of his country.

I also had an interesting experience when following Kurt, one of the filmmakers in RCF’s network, to the reunion of people who’s parents and family came as slaves from Jamaica to South Africa (referring to chapter 6.2, the 8 of November). In the search for his identity and roots, Kurt decided to start looking for his relatives and family way back to Jamaica. Along the way he met many people in the same situation as him self and he decided, just like Martina and Vaughan, to use the camera to document his search.

The process of making these films and being able to show them to the people in the townships motivated the filmmakers both in terms of searching for their own identity and inspiring others to do the same. One of RCF’s purposes for starting the Molweni Film Festival in the townships was to create a possibility for people in the townships to see films that told stories about their own people and to inspire them to start expressing themselves. Their films are examples of how you can use personal stories and visions to work consciously on your own “identity journey” and motivate others in their search for their heritage and history (referring to chapter 6.2, the 21 of October, 10th of November, 15th of
November and 17\textsuperscript{th} of November). It is an example of how the organization’s shared vision is built upon the members personal visions.

7.2.3 Team learning

The projects RCF has chosen and the way the filmmakers operates shows upon how their personal visions creates and supports the shared vision of RCF as an organization. Even if the stories are personal in their nature, the organization work as a team, which means that they are all assisting each other and discussing each other’s projects. This is important not only for the artistic and creative process, but for the process of team learning and the feeling-of-belonging. The feeling-of-belonging is central in a team. Everyone has to feel that your opinions and thoughts are being appreciated even if other members of the team can have different opinions. A team is not a team if a feeling-of-belonging is not shared by all of its members. If the feeling is mutual among the members it is also more likely that conflicts can be turned into something constructive and positive for the organization. For example a process like RCF had to go through with the Ikon-showcase regarding rights, is an experience that is important to share with other filmmakers in their network for them to avoid the same situation (referring to chapter 6.2, the 21\textsuperscript{st}, 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 24\textsuperscript{th} of September, 3\textsuperscript{rd} of October and 5\textsuperscript{th} of November). Learning and sharing experiences is important when building a strong organization that will have the skills to make its way through the industry. I remember Martina saying, “In school you always got exercises and homework. For us to be able to take on the big challenges we also have to do our exercises properly”.

Senge discusses the need of being able to develop teams in today’s society. Weather it has to do with manager groups or project groups, people need each other to succeed. Almost all the important decisions are being made in groups. Either because the decision is being made in the group or because the group is necessary for the realization of an individual’s decision. Senge writes “(…) if teams learn, they become a microcosm for learning throughout the organization. Insights gained are put into action. Skills developed can propagate o other individuals and to other teams (…) The teams accomplishments can set the tone and establish a standard for learning together for the larger organization.” (Senge: 1990:236).

Senge discusses three aspects of team learning in an organization. Firstly there is a need of handling complex questions. For this purpose the members’ needs to learn how to listen to each other. Through listening to each other more knowledge develops than the individuals
would have had access to by themselves. Secondly there is a need for innovative collaboration. All members can act spontaneously and independently but still keep the mutual direction. The third aspect discusses the importance of understanding how different groups collaborate and affect each other. Most of the decisions made by groups higher up in the organization are going to be realized by other groups. One group’s effort affects and gives birth to other groups.

By taking part in each other’s productions and discussing issues that comes along with the creative process, RCF learn as a team. For the team to grow in terms of knowledge it is important that all members share their experiences with each other. Producing issues are important to discuss in their network, so that they can affect the traditional oppressing structures in the industry. But the artistic issues are just as important for the creation of quality films that will make the network respected in the industry. When editing, Martina and Vaughan often looks at each other’s projects and it is interesting to listen to their discussions around the underlying message in the films and the politic statement that they make. In RCF’s team the members have developed a sharp skill of analyzing society. Their experiences from growing up in the townships and deciding to consciously work on the transformation of their society, have made them very sharp at analyzing strategies, politic issues and structures. Their analysis seems to be present in every decision they make regarding the films and the actions that the organization takes. The filmmakers in RCF’s network and team work independently and free, but at the same time they share and discuss their material with the other members in the network. An example of their mutual goal is the Molweni festival and the screening of the films they co-ordinate in the townships (referring to the 10th, 15th and 17th of November).

7.2.4 Shared visions and the creative tension
Senges define “a shared vision” as a very vital force in the human heart that, if it is convincing enough, can be very concrete and clear. Few phenomenons are as powerful for people’s commitments as a shared vision. With a simple explanation one could say that a shared vision is the answer of the question “What do you want to create?” It is an idea or a picture of what you want to achieve. The shared vision builds the platform for co-operation and feeling-of-belonging. A shared vision shows upon an ambition that derives its nourishment from the mutual engagement. One of the reasons why we build shared visions is because we have a need for a feeling-of-belonging. In a shared vision the people involved are
included and engaged because it reflects their personal vision. The shared vision is always in relation to your reality and what the situation is like today. “The road” that lies between where you are and where you want to go, Senge speaks about as “the creative tension”. You could say that it is the creative tension that creates the learning process in the organization. The goals and the vision are always ahead and it is by learning that you get closer to them.

The way I see RCF’s vision is that their choice to run a film production company who produce documentaries, short films and hopefully feature film in the future, is a step closer to their “higher purpose” of transforming the structures in their society and creating possibilities for all individuals to develop and learn. In other words producing film is not the higher purpose of their existence – it is a part of their vision that serves their “higher purpose”. The creative tension seems to be a natural ingredient in RCF’s organization. They have high ambitions but at the same time they are very aware of the learning process they have to go through. It seems like they get energy and motivation from the creative tension and the learning process. Something that makes them put up new challenging goals along “the road”. Their shared vision inspires their members to take risks and to experiment.

An example that shows upon how their vision is put into action is RCF’s initiative to start the Molweni Film festival (referring to chapter 6.2, the 21st of October). RCF and some of the filmmakers in their network funded the Molweni Film festival. Molweni became an NGO (Non governmental organisation) that was separated from RCF. Their plan was to organize a festival for the people in the townships as well as bringing international filmmakers and local filmmakers from town to see the films at the screenings in the townships. During 3-4 days, in different places around the townships, they screened films made by black filmmakers and the cinema was open for everybody for free. Without a shared vision among the members, Molweni would probably not have been able to arrange this festival. But because of the member’s commitment to a shared vision, they made the festival happen even with very limited resources. Trough the Molweni Film festival the filmmakers in this network have transformed their vision into action. By arranging a film festival for the people in the townships, Molweni contributes to the transformation of the South African society on many levels. Except for building up the infrastructure in the townships, the access to film and art gives people a possibility to use their freedom-of-speech and to create strength among the black people. Also, they contribute to the industry in large, nationally and internationally, by
developing new ideas and exiting stories from their culture. Notes from the screenings I attended prove the importance of their work (referring to chapter 6.2, the 15th of November).

RCF and Molweni are convinced that it is of great importance to make film that tells stories from the past and how it has affected today’s society. I especially remember Martina’s reactions when discussing these questions at the presentation of the Ikon-showcase at the video education CVET (referring to chapter 6.2, the 7th of October). Her statement and arguments were very clear and showed upon her genuine conviction of what needs to be done in society and the film industry.

7.2.5 The uniting force of the shared vision is stronger than the separating force of a conflict
The shared vision is a uniting force. When the organization or the team is in a flow you might not even notice the shared vision, it is something that just exists among the members. Sometimes it requires a threat or a conflict to experience the existence of the organization’s shared vision. The shared vision that Senge describes is something that runs through the whole organization and, if it is strong enough, makes the organization or the team handle the most difficult tests and conflicts without falling apart.

When speaking about creative and artistic organizations and teams, Senge’s “shared vision” would include both “the artistic vision” and “the economic vision”. In film production in general there is often a conflict between the “artistic vision” and “the economic vision”. The old tradition of dividing a film team into one artistic part and one economic part is stuck deep down in the structures of filmmaking.

The producer’s dilemma is often to put these to parts together and to make the members listen to each other to be able to find the best creative solutions possible for what they want to achieve. When the team manage to find the win-win solution it is a proof of the existence of some kind of shared vision that is stronger than the separating force. In the thesis “Organization and leadership in film production”, written by Marja Soila-Wadman (Soila-Wadman: 2003), the problem with the separation between the director’s vision being explained as the artistic vision, and the producer’s as the economic vision, is being discussed. The question “if it is not meant for everybody to be on the same journey” is put into the light
and it is obvious that it is not as easy in practice as it is in the theory. It is like as if the team tends to forget that both visions affects and depends on each other in a chain.

In RCF’s case a conflict regarding the director’s rights for one of the films in the Ikon-showcase was close to tear the team apart (referring to chapter 6.2, the 24th of September). The showcase was a step in the direction of the team’s shared vision to create opportunities for black filmmakers to show their films and tell their stories. This time the showcase was to be broadcast in the South African Television and RCF had a difficult situation trying to get a fare contract with SABC (the South African Broadcaster). The producer RCF and the director of the film, mentioned in the notes, had the same opinions regarding the content and artistic of the film. But it turned out that they were not on the same journey when it came to the economic questions, like budget and rights. It seemed like they had not been communicating enough around what strategies they had in mind for reaching their goal to make their way into the homes of the television viewers of South Africa by broadcasting the showcase in SABC.

RCF´s strategy was to make a joint effort together with the directors and their teams to produce the showcase as a first step towards a new contract with SABC, which would include longer versions of these short films that could lead to a more sustainable co-operation with the broadcaster in the future. Since the resources were very limited for this first step, RCF had to keep the rights to be able to go through with the next step that would also make it possible for the directors to get their rights to the longer versions of the films. But the director for this film had a different opinion when it came to the rights for the first films. The director had not thought about the strategy in the same way as RCF even if she shared the same vision about creating space for the black filmmakers in the South African Television.

This conflict shows upon a process that was going on for a couple of weeks, but came to an end when all parts finally started to communicate and get back to the powerful commitment of their shared vision. This example shows that if a shared vision exists and is strong enough, different opinions or difficult conflicts will not have the strength of tearing a united team apart. If they had quit their future co-operation, it would have been some kind of proof that the shared vision was not strong enough and that their commitment could have broken down
in their next project. This example shows that there was a shared vision that included the artistic as well as the economic vision, something that conquered the separating forces in the organization.

7.3 Communication and leadership

7.3.1 Descriptions of the theories and the discipline “mental-models”

Could it be that the organization’s ability of being creative depends on its approach to the skill of learning and the existence of a learning atmosphere among the members? Often, the existence of a learning atmosphere depends on the people leading the organization. What about asking the question: How can we organize creativity? Many people would say that creativity is the opposite of organizing, that creativity is something “free”. This can also be the case, but most often creativity comes out of hard work and some kind of discipline and driving force in relation to the goal. If there are several people involved in the creative process, somebody has to coordinate them towards the same goal. The traditional opinion in filmmaking has been that it is the director’s artistic creativity that makes the film. In other words the hierarchic structure has been the most frequent one throughout the history of filmmaking. But, lately the debate has shifted towards the opinion that it is actually the creative process of the whole team that makes an interesting film.

Today we speak about the director’s main purpose as being the engine in the creative process of the team. Qualities like being able to lead a team and motivating your members by including them in your work, is more and more important. The same skills and expectations lay upon the producer who has an important role when putting a well functioning team together. Time and resources are often enemies when it comes to exploring the creativity and making room for the learning process in a film production. But what is often forgotten is that you will never find creative solutions if you do not create an atmosphere that encourage learning and that requires an open and experimenting approach to time and resources. If the leaders of the team manage to communicate in a way that motivates their members to learn and take responsibility for developing themselves, that will contribute to the result of the film.

The problem that stops us from using the creativity within us is often that we believe our “mental models” are the truth about how the world works. Why is it that the best ideas seldom get to be done? We know that it would be an amazing result, but we do not actually realize the
idea. Senge’s conclusion is that it has nothing to do with for example bad intentions or insufficient will, ambition or knowledge. It is because of our “mental-models”. The new ideas and thoughts do not correspond with our picture of the present reality and how the world works, that is why the extraordinary ideas have such difficulty to get a hold in our present reality. Our mental-models that we have built up on personal experiences and influences from the world around keep us in ingrained systems of thoughts and behaviours. Senge explains mental-models as our rough generalized pictures or symbols that affect our ability to understand the world around us and how we are supposed to behave. Most often we are not aware of our mental-models and the way they affect our lives. Senge means that what we need is to learn to affect our mental-models, in other words to bring them out, look at our values and revise our pictures. This skill is of crucial importance when building a learning organization.

7.3.2 Why listen to our own limitations?
Since the mental models are a result of our life experiences, they are individual and subjective. But could it be that there are phenomenons that exist among people in general? An example of such a phenomenon could be the subjective idea of the limitations we imagine that we have. Hesitation and uncertainty are often feelings that come along with new challenges and missions. Many people are being stopped by their fear to fail and relatively few people enjoy the feeling of putting themselves in a risky situation to challenge their mental-model and transform existing structures. But there are people and groups (or teams) that seem to have a natural conviction that “life consists of challenges” that includes taking risks and that there is now other way than taking action for what you believe in. Sometimes we use the word “entrepreneurs” to explain this kind of quality. The entrepreneurs seem to work more consciously on breaking away from their limitations and mental-models. RCF is an organization that fits well into the characteristics of Henry Mintzberg’s model of the “entrepreneurial organization” (Mintzberg). He describes the entrepreneurial organization as a simple, informal and flexible structure. It has often got a limited group of members or staff and it is highly influenced by the leader’s personal vision. The entrepreneurial organization often operates in a transforming environment. The expression Mintzberg mean summarize many of his researches is “celebrate intuition”. RCF possess the courage that is needed to realize the ideas that could seem impossible from the very beginning. When RCF started out they had hardly no money, resources or technical facilities to make film. Their solution was to inspire other organizations and individuals to believe in their vision and to support their ideas.
Without being affected by the mainstream RCF has manage to build an independent organization, with their own facilities, that produces films that many people would just wish they dared to make.

Senge writes about two types of skills that are needed for the organization to develop: the skill to reflect and the skill to examine. RCF owns both skills and uses them as a complement to each other. Their engagement and ability to analyze and reflect over their society and structure as well as their approach to learning and examination of possibilities and “invented limitations” makes them transform their conclusions into action. If thinking that something is impossible without examine the possibilities, you know nothing. Instead of looking at a whole chain of problems that ends up being heavy demands, RCF seem to solve one step at a time.

7.3.3 Teaching yourself to be able to teach others how to teach themselves
To be able to contribute in the transformation of the manifested structure and mental-model of people leading the country, RCF has to build up their mutual knowledge by creating possibilities for their members to train and learn new skills. It is of great importance that everybody is his or her own leader and manager. If you want to learn and make your own conclusions, and not buying someone’s opinion, you have to be prepared to learn “the hard way”. Making mistakes is a risk that everyone has to take. We can learn from each other and avoid mistakes by listening to advices, but it is most often that we learn about ourselves, and the world that surrounds, us by "doing". The difficulty is to conquer our fear of failing and to see the strength in learning the hard way by welcoming mistakes as well as successes. Sometimes our fear is connected to what we are afraid of loosing and we are stopped by all the problems that we build up in our heads. But if reaching a point where you realize that you actually do not have anything to loose, you will probably start to explore your ideas.

As a leader you also need to learn how to inspire and teach others. Martina and Vaughan have been going through a lot of training through working with different organizations and educations. After university studies in media and politics they both got into media and journalism. Martina started a video production-training course, called CVET, where Vaughan was one of the students. Their pedagogic and learning experiences from the time at CVET have been an important skill when starting up RCF and the Molweni organization as well as inspiring and teaching their members. Today they work mostly as mentors for their partners.
and emerging filmmakers in their network. They engage the less experienced camera operators to assist in different projects, for example Brenda who assisted Vaughan at the shooting at Robben Island (referring to chapter 6.2 the 11th of October). And sometimes Vaughan and Martina assist their partners when shooting and planning their projects, like Vaughan when working with Kurt (referring to chapter 6.2 the 8th of November).

There are different opinions about what is a leader’s main purpose and how to practice leadership. One of the main purposes is to create a platform for the people you are working with to learn and develop their own visions. As a leader you should encourage people to try new ideas and to learn from their mistakes. If a leader can make a person feel that he found a solution himself, even though the leader was the one to show him in the right direction, the leader has fulfilled his purpose. Leadership includes that you sometimes have to let go of the control that you might have in a leading position. It could be difficult if your experience say that you need to stop somebody from doing the same mistake as you might have done in the past. But on the other hand it’s a learning experience what ever result that comes out. To inspire people to teach themselves is an important mission for RCF. All of the members in their network need to be encouraged to break their own mental-models and express themselves. Both practical training and mental training is important for the motivation and courage among the members. The filmmaker who has the experience from for example producing or camerawork becomes a kind of mentor for the less experienced.

Sometimes you might feel like there is no room for experimenting because of the limited resources that the organization has to survive. The balance between security and new experiments that could possibly lead to a positive development is a difficult question for most small entrepreneurial organizations. For example, in an organization with few experienced people and many people that are in the beginning of a learning process, it is sometimes necessary that the experienced ones have to make certain decisions not to risk the survival of the organization. RCF have supported a lot of new talents and Martina and Vaughan have shared their experience with them. This is something that they see as their mission and as an important resource for their company. But it is also a big responsibility and two people are sometimes not enough to keep their company going at the same time as supporting filmmakers with less experience to develop their projects. But the organizations learning approach is clear about taking responsibility for the importance of teaching new emerging
filmmakers to develop in their network and industry. “Learning by doing” makes people learn and grow amazingly fast.

7.4 Transformation and strategy
7.4.1 Description of the theme and theories

This section discusses possible connections between strategy, transformation and learning. For example how the attitude to transformation can have an affect on the strategy, and the capacity of learning. Also, questions like “what it is that creates the resistance to transformation” are being discussed.

All actions that take place in an organization tell something about its strategy. But it is not always a conscious strategy that causes the actions from the beginning. In my study I noticed the difficulty of finding the possible underlying strategies that the organization uses. But the presence of frequently expressed values, methods and actions showed upon the existence of a strategy that makes the organization move forward and transform. There was no “written down strategy”, but I studied expressions and actions that could be looked upon as bricks that form a certain pattern, a strategy. Leif Melin writes in “Organisationsteori på svenska” (Czarniawska: 1998: 61) ”Den inneboende dynamiken i strategiprocesser handlar till stor del om "kampen" mellan det befintliga, dvs. det historiskt framväxta och det framtida möjliga, med andra ord mellan att bevara, befästa och försvara det nuvarande och att ifrågasätta, tänka om och kreera det nya.” 2 Notice the similarity to the tension between the present reality and the future vision that makes the creative tension. I would say the creative tension is “the fuel” to the actions that constitutes the strategy. According to Melin, the essence of the strategic process is the movement of the organization from its history into its future.

Taking a new step often means spending a lot of time analyzing risks and trying to prevent different situations. But you can only build up security to a certain point. Sometimes new challenges means finding yourself in unexpected problems that you could not have prevented because you simply did not have that experience. The way an organization handles unexpected situations says something fundamental about the organization’s attitude to transformation and change. Maybe, that the attitude has an impact on the strategy. If using

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2 “The inherent dynamic of strategy processes is often about the "battle" between what exists, i.e. what has evolved historically, and what is possible in the future, in other words between preserving, strengthening and protecting the present, and questioning, rethinking and creating something new.”
planning and preventing as the company’s strategy to handle their worries for unexpected situations, it can be devastating if the plans do not work. An open attitude to changes and unexpected problems can often be the difference between success and failure.

7.4.2 Learning through transformation

In RCF’s case the strategy that is needed to survive includes welcoming unexpected changes. According to Normann, the process of learning and the out coming transformation of structures accelerate if an organization operates in a varying, complicated and demanding environment (Normann: 1975). Because of the fact that most of the filmmakers in RCF’s network have been through difficult times, in terms of the political and social oppression, RCF and their network are driven by the conviction that risks are worth taking if you want to make a change. It seems like a mission for them to constantly take on new challenges and learn by doing.

While producing the Ikon-showcase, RCF suddenly found themselves in a situation they would never have expected from the beginning (referring to chapter 6.2 the 22nd of September – 7th of November). Finding yourself in the middle of a conflict sometimes makes you tired of “learning the hard way by doing”. Holding on to your independence and finding new solutions, so that the industry will develop, requires a constant reminder of your goal to try to find the solutions and strategies that will give all parts a win-win situation. But the transformation in itself is also a risk. It is easy to lose the focus on parts of your vision in the complexity of a transformation process and some sacrifices might be inevitable. In RCF’s position they have to spend a lot of energy and work to make their way into the film industry and to open up possibilities for other filmmakers and companies to develop. I remember Vaughan saying that he started to miss the contact with the local people, emerging filmmakers and organizations in the townships. Time and resources are just not enough to work on all levels at the same time (referring to chapter 6.2 the 16th of November).

The Ikon-showcase was a very important step for RCF both strategically, for the growth of the company and to transform the film industry, and in terms of learning. But a process of transformation and development seldom comes easy. The situation had started to get complicated long before I came to RCF. Martina and Vaughan explained the situation and the chain of problems that had occurred as a result of the unexpected delay of their contract with their co-producing partners SABC (South Africa Broadcasting). RCF had never been through
a similar process of dealing with rights in a co-production situation (referring to chapter 6.2 the 22th, 24th of September and 5th of November). In a way they had thought SABC would have known how to create a co-production contract, but now they understood that they had to learn how to deal with this on their own. SABC claimed all the rights for the production and they had not considered the fact that the stories were personally attached to the filmmakers and that the films, even from a moral aspect, could not be owned by a hundred percent by a distributor. To give away the rights would have been like giving away their life story and identity. This situation made RCF develop skills in for example producing and distributing that would take them to the next step of the process and it made them stand up for their identity and believes even stronger. By not giving up on their values, vision and intentions and proceeding until SABC themselves realized that they had no good arguments for their requirements, RCF had created a strategy that made them independent and impossible to threaten.

Even if RCF had to go through hard times I think they gained a lot of knowledge and self-confidence because of the fact that they managed to build up the conditions under which they wanted to work. They were prepared to learn the hard way by putting themselves in a new situation and with the result in their hands it was worth all worries and hard work. When they finally got respect for their opinions and knowledge, a transformation of the traditional structure had been achieved. Senge says “We fight against what is. We are not so much drawn to what we want to create as we are repelled by what we have, from our current reality.” (Senge: 1990: 154). RCF´s strategy was a good example of building up what they were longing for. If the industry wants to build up a platform for South African film, the institutions need to develop a structure that supports the independent companies, not destroys them. Senge mean that the belief in our capacity to create our own future is the basis for transformation and engagement. Could it be that it is this belief in combination with a shared vision that consists of the member’s personal visions, which generates the strength in RCF’s organization? Sometimes you have to put yourself through difficult situations to reach the next level of knowledge and experience. But you need to be convinced and motivated to have enough strength to hang on to your goal. In the middle of a conflict it is easy to start questioning weather it is worth the hard time of learning, breaking your mental-models and creating something new. In this context Senge discusses the importance of a leadership that focuses on creating a shared vision out of the members personal visions “Creating and maintaining the shared visions should be included in the leader’s daily work. It is an ongoing
process and a central part of the leadership”. Next time, when taking on new challenges, RCF will have a lot more experiences. There is of course a limit for how much worries and work you can take on. Because of the fact that Martina and Vaughan were both making one film each in the Ikon showcase, I think they realized the importance of developing more producing skills among the other filmmakers in their network, to relieve the pressure on the two of them and to develop and transform the industry.

Being able to critically question traditional structures is a necessary quality when creating transformation. I believe RCF has this quality and they do not give up their believes even if they are confronted by long traditional structures or institutions. Except for the situation with SABC they expressed similar underlying believes, experiences, values and visions at other occasions, like for example the meeting with the scriptwriter organization SASWA (referring to chapter 6.2, the 30th of September). To break free from traditional structures we have to keep questioning them and look at them critically, even if we can use and appreciate them at the same time.

7.4.3 Safety, control and stability

Macchiavelli once said that “the one who starts a transformation makes himself an enemy to all those who had something to gain from what was before, and he gets just half-hearted support among the defenders that could benefit from the change”. To lead and create transformation or to be artistically creative is a hard and risky work. Transforming old traditional values, in for example complex institutions or bureaucratic organisations, takes a lot of energy, courage and engagement from the objecting part. What gives the objecting part strength is often the existence of a shared vision and a higher purpose. But transformation and development can put the vision and purpose through hard tests along the way.

Safety is closely linked to stability and control – a positive feeling and level where we can rest and where the need for renewal, transformation and development often decreases. Maybe it is because we do not want to risk loosing control and stability. The feeling of safety is often placed high up on the priority list. It seems like the experience of safety is one of the most difficult things to risk when a transformation is knocking on the door. But the condition of safety is false since it could be just as dangerous not to transform. I think the tardiness of transformation depends on people and organizations being afraid of risking their feeling of safety. The amount of safety that is needed for a person or an organization is individual and
relative, probably in relation to the society and environment where we are being brought up or live.

I agree with Senge that “the human being both fear and long for transformation”. I think the meaning that we put into safety and the extent to which we let fear keep us from transforming depends on the environment we relate to. The safety that is built up upon materialism, economy and access to a social security system is one kind. The other kind is the safety that is built upon relations between people and shared visions. When RCF started out they did not have access to an “economic safety”, but they definitely had a strong network and relations to people that were motivated to work for a mutual goal and who were prepared to risk a lot to contribute to a transformation. Even if economic safety, control and stability are one of RCF’s goals in the future to be able to survive and expand as an organization, the fear of risking that safety would not stop RCF from creating transformation.

8. Reflections and conclusions
If we assume that the “learning organization” according to Senge’s theories could exist, I think RCF is a good example. The basic condition for a learning organization is that “the system thinking” runs through the whole organization. If the members cannot see how all bits and pieces are linked together the creativity will be reduced and the focus on the organization’s vision easy to loose. System thinking includes practicing the disciplines shared visions, mentalmodels and teamlearning. In RCF’s case the system thinking seems like a natural value and a bas in their actions. I was often fascinated of their way of analyzing actions and reactions as in a chain instead of isolated situations. For example, their conviction of holding on to the demands they believed was fair in the discussion with SABC. If RCF would have given up and agreed to the contract that SABC were trying to make them sign, it would have been not just a lost for RCF of artistic creative products but a victory for the traditional structure of the film industry.

I would say Senge’s description of system thinking is as well a description of how to organize creativity. “System thinking” includes the disciplines like for example team learning, shared visions and mentalmodels. He describes system thinking as “It is the discipline that integrates the disciplines, fusing them into a coherent body of theory and practice. (…) visions without systems thinking ends up painting lovely pictures of the future with no deep understanding of the forces that must be mastered to move from here to there.
This is one of the reasons why many firms that have jumped on the “vision bandwagon” in recent years have found that lofty vision alone fails to turn around a firm’s fortunes. Without systems thinking, the seed of visions falls on harsh soil. If nonsystemic thinking predominates, the first condition for nurturing vision is not met: a genuine belief that we can make our vision real in the future.” (Senge: 1990:12). It is the same thing with “creativity” – beautiful ideas are not enough. If we do not have a system or strategy for how to accomplish the idea we will not manage to be creative, productive and transform. Being productive means “accomplish something in relation to your goals”. If you do not know your goal, you cannot be productive. RCF’s goals are clear and connected to the “higher purpose”. Their level of team learning and the existence of a shared vision among the members, depend on RCF’s capability of creating a feeling-of-belonging and motivation to personally develop. The existence of their shared vision shows in the way they serve their mission. I would say their mission is their action-plan. To reach a shared vision, the communication and leadership that is practiced in the organization must focus on supporting learning and creativity. This requires that all members and leaders question their mental models and preconceived limitations, which is one of RCF’s most evident strengths. The organization’s attitude to transformation and the strategy that is being used to create the transformation, are important elements for the existence of a learning and creative environment. Senge writes about some important aspects when discussing the disciplines connection in system thinking “Building shared visions guarantee the long term engagement. Mental models provide the company with the openness that is required to be able to see our insufficient capability of absorbing the world that surrounds us. “Team learning develops the skills of groups of people to look for the larger picture that lies beyond individual perspectives.” (Senge: 1990:12). Senge also discuss the importance of the person’s motivation to understand how the personal action affects the world around. Since the learning organization builds upon a shared vision that comes out of the member’s personal visions, it is also frail because it has to do with every individuals’ personal values and norms. Therefore conflicts among the members easily get personal, which affects the whole organization. But RCF has managed to turn conflicts into something that the organization can learn from, which shows upon the strength of RCF’s shared vision.

The definition of the concept “creativity”, and the disciplines that Senge means constitute “a learning organization”, are applicable to RCF’s organization on many levels. “Creativity” is a wide concept. When focusing on film production there are two main creative areas, “the
“artistic” and “the organizational and economical”. The level of creativity depends on how these areas are linked together to reach the organization’s mutual goals. Creativity comes out as a result of the organizations attitude to “learning”. The effort that the organization put into working on the disciplines, that Senge means constitute a learning organization, often shows upon the level of creativity. If “learning” is highly prioritized, the creativity will grow. In a learning and creative organization the shared vision is built upon the member’s personal visions and motivation to develop. RCF’s actions, expression of values and statements shows upon a shared vision and a higher purpose of the organization’s existence. By communicating their values and believes, they create a feeling-of-belonging among their members where the process of learning and searching are important goals. The filmmakers in RCF have the ability to turn the process of personal development into a creative process that in it self becomes a result or product. Since their films serve as a tool to get closer to their personal and shared vision, I believe that the artistic result also becomes something that inspires the audience to learn about their own creative capability and aim for their personal vision. RCF’s creativity is a proof of people being able to accomplish a lot more than the present resources allow them to do.

RCF have a strong driving-force that has its origin in mutual values. This driving force creates renewal and starts processes. Their passion of creating meaning drives them to find new solutions, possibilities and platforms. Their intuition guides them in their creative decision, even if rational strategies and decisions must be made to organize the creativity. The writers Daniel Hjort and Bengt Johanisson describes the entrepreneurial projects purpose as “Ett entreprenöriellt projekt drivs inte för att det lönar sig utan för att det kan ge resurser till nya projekt.”3 (Czarniawska: 1998: 96). RCF’s strategy seem to build upon this thought, that even if a project does not make a profit it can open up for new possibilities and create long-term goals that can serve other purposes than financial goals. In RCF’s case I would explain their higher purpose as “working for a transformation of society”, something that is more important than the film itself. Their purpose and vision are realized by using the media of film and television to support the freedom-of-speech by telling their stories and giving black people a voice.

3 “An entrepreneurial project is not undertaken because it is profitable but because it can generate resources for new projects.”
RCF’s ability to create and organize creativity is primarily a result of their openness to learning and the way they work on for example team learning, transformation and visions. The concrete planning and organizing to accomplish an idea is just a natural outcome of the motivation that raises in the presence of a shared vision and system thinking. The purposes of the films are united with the purpose of their organization.

Many organizations in our society could gain a lot from learning this way of thinking. If the members visions are united with the visions of their organization, the planning and realization of a process or project will be a lot more powerful. The direction in which the organization is going and the aim for the result of their activities will also be much clearer if the individual members purpose is united with the purpose of the organization. If the organization has a clear and shared vision and purpose, the organizing of the actions will be easier to define and the choices for the leaders easier to make.

The skill of being able to see how the disciplines are linked together in the organization, and being able to consciously act according to this, is something that organizations in general and filmmaking organizations in particular need to develop. Organization structures that are built up on effectiveness, without considering the disciplines and themes discussed in this study, will most probably get stuck in the traditional way of organizing. This mean that the teammembers often feel disconnected to their work and the result of the organization. This way the organization will never be able to work at its full capacity. I think all organizations have a lot of effectiveness and engagement to win if the organization and the members leading the organization realize how important it is to look at all pieces of the system in the organization and to prioritize to work on the disciplines. Shared visions are a requirement, for example to be able to use conflicts as a positive generator to find creative solutions. The capacity of questioning your mentalmodels will develop the creativity and start innovation and transformation. A teamlearning where knowledge is shared and spread throughout the organization make the organization develop and create a learning atmosphere and mutual goals, that support the growth of creativity. The disciplines are essential when building and organizing creativity. If an organization does not have the capacity of building shared visions, questioning its own mentalmodels and supporting learning in the team, the creativity will not have a platform to grow and develop in the organization.
To be able to create “learning organizations” all individuals need to learn how to look upon society in a systematic way, as a “system thinker”, who personally develop and consciously looks at his or her mental models in a wider context. Thinking of the important role that organizations play in today society it can definitely be one of the most effective ways of “rewriting the code”, to change not just what we think but how we think. In this perspective the learning organizations can have a great impact on the future. Not only for the development of organizations, but for the development of the common sense.

System thinking includes learning, practicing and working on the disciplines shared visions, mental models and team learning. The skill “system thinking” is the most powerful skill for an organization to have when building for example creative strategies and structures for long-term aims and goals. The individual members motivation is the power of the human capital, which is the organizations most important resource in the long run. Therefore, aspects like the disciplines and the themes, analysed and discussed in this study, should be considered equally important and united with the organizations economical goals.
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