Letting Go of the Rei[g]n: Developments within an Orchestra in a Time of Change

Ralph Bathurst  
Department of Management and International Business, Massey University, Albany campus

Lloyd Williams  
CEO, Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design

Anne Rodda  
General Manager, Auckland Philharmonia

Ralph Bathurst is a lecturer in business communication and is a former orchestral musician.

Lloyd Williams is CEO of WCAD, a contract orchestral musician and a former General Manager of the Auckland Philharmonia.

Anne Rodda is an orchestral musician and has been the General Manager of the Auckland Philharmonia for the last 4 years.

Abstract
Arts organisations rely on the willing participation of artists, managers and funding agencies. In recent years both private and public sponsors of the arts have required greater accountability and have insisted on structures that meet higher standards of corporate governance. This paper offers a case study of an orchestra during the time of governance change. Issues specific to symphony orchestral management are canvassed focusing on areas that led to the near collapse of the enterprise. Kenneth Burke’s notion of logology is proposed with the claim that the threat of dissolution and the need to find a symbolic scapegoat was required for the musicians to let go of governance control, move beyond their impasse, and to enable them to consider new forms of ownership.

Keywords  
Symphony orchestra, restructuring, governance, logology.

In late February 2005, Auckland’s musical icon, the Auckland Philharmonia (AP), came under the media spotlight. Whilst in most cases positive publicity is the life blood of any artistic organisation, the article ‘Orchestral manoeuvres in the dark’ (Barton, 2005) in a metropolitan daily The New Zealand Herald signalled bad news. The two-page spread reviewing recent events in the AP arose from a leaked document—a governance diagnostic on the orchestra that included some highly critical comments. It also publicly exposed the financial status of the orchestra. Finally the public had been let in on closely guarded secrets known only to those who had access to Green Room discussions—that internal conflict had ‘wracked’ the AP for the past four years and that the enterprise had reached an impasse and was facing insolvency. Those close to the
orchestra were left wondering whether the exposé would sound its death knell or if it signalled a new turning point in its fortunes.

In this paper we summarise the early history of the orchestra from 1981. We then examine in detail the years from 2003 to 2005, a period of intense conflict, and then employ Kenneth Burke’s rhetorical turn and in particular his explication of the symbolic through logology (Burke, 1961). Through this lens we propose a way forward for an organisation on the brink of collapse that goes beyond mere simplified rationalistic solutions and make the claim that crisis is a necessary prerequisite for sustainable change.

The Auckland Philharmonia: A History

Artistic organisations rely on the willing collaboration of a diverse array of stakeholders and artistic, financial, governance, and managerial issues need to be attended to in order for an enterprise to maintain both financial and artistic credibility. This is particularly the case in symphony orchestras which depend on regular injections of capital from willing patrons, be they public agencies or private funders. Alongside this, the orchestra must demonstrate to its audience a concern for artistic integrity. In this regard, there is the need to perform demanding works that stretch the musicians’ capabilities, as well as providing a steady repertoire of accessible compositions that satisfy box office requirements.

What happens when these financial and artistic ideals collide? Furthermore, how can they be reconciled when stakeholder groups become entrenched in their position to the point where meaningful dialogue has broken down and parties have become embittered?

The symphony orchestra is a complex organisation which holds in subtle balance competing ideals and practices. On-stage the orchestra is managed hierarchically, adhering to strict codes of conduct and practices that are traditional, constant and universal. Recent research has focused on this public face including leadership practice (Koivunen, 2003), the relationship between musicians and conductors (Atik, 1994), decision making processes (Maitlis, 1997) and industrial relations issues (Tindall, 2004). Similarly, conductor-consultants like Roger Nierenberg (Nierenberg, 2003) and Benjamin Zander ("The power of leadership: A view from the arts," 1997) have capitalised on this fascination with orchestral leadership to show how managers in the corporate world can make the transition from bureaucrat to ‘maestro’ (Churchley, 2004).

Little is known, though, about the orchestra off-stage. Although Xavier Castañer’s study of the Barcelona Symphony during a period of industrial crisis explores the relationship between artistic integrity and sound business practice (Castañer, 1999), what is not known is how orchestras confront and deal with structural change at an institutional level. How do orchestras maintain and develop their standards of artistic excellence while at the same time cope with the volatility and chaos of governance restructuring?

From its inception the AP was governed as a cooperative. The decision to manage the enterprise in this way resulted from player disaffection as a result of the collapse of its forerunner, the Auckland Symphonia. In 1981 the so-called Phoenix Group of young and energetic musicians who were both highly proficient and entrepreneurial, eschewed
the former management structure where the board and management team and musical director dominated decision making.

The new cooperative structure was led by the Secretary of the Society. This elected musician became, in effect, the orchestra’s CEO, meaning that on-stage he or she could be a rank-and-file musician under the direction of the section principal, yet off-stage be the most powerful person in the enterprise. While the members of the new cooperative were comfortable with this duality, those more familiar with chain-of-command organisational structures from the business world found this confusion of roles difficult to comprehend.

In line with the spirit of the cooperative, small committees were charged with the responsibility for examining artistic, programming and personnel issues. However, the constitution still allowed the Society as a whole to ratify all decisions made by these committees, and resolutions could be re-visited at any time and for any reason.

The new orchestra was conceived as a part time orchestra with players needing to supplement their meagre earnings with income from other sources. In spite of the initial enterprising spirit of the founding musicians, many were content with working part time as semi-professionals. As the orchestra grew, this attitude was challenged by a gradual influx of new-comers intent on the AP taking its place among second-tier world class orchestras. So by its 20th anniversary, the orchestra had changed dramatically from a part time ensemble of 35 core players to a full time operation with a cohort of 68 tenured musicians.

Although welcomed by all stakeholders, this growth came with a number of fiscal and governmental challenges. Because of the dilution of the original players by musicians from Europe, Asia and North America with experience in a variety of corporately operated orchestras, along with the unwieldy nature of the cooperative structure where the whole group ratified artistic and personnel decisions, changes to management systems throughout the enterprise became inevitable.

As more and more administrative staff were hired and managers appointed to oversee the back office functions, many of the longer-term players struggled to adapt to the new environment. How could those wedded to the cooperative structure continue to have control over the strategic and artistic development of the orchestra whilst at the same time let go sufficiently to let the managers manage? As owners of the AP brand, the musicians were being asked to relinquish power in order to improve artistic quality and ease the burden of managers toiling with cumbersome decision making processes.

The dawn of the new millennium came with ominous portents. Whilst the orchestra had been struggling to adapt to its own internal changes, external factors were also impacting on it.

Given the financial limitations of running a lean orchestra, recognition had always been given to creating and enhancing revenue streams and exhibiting traits of trustworthiness and reliability to elicit that financial support. However, due to unfavourable conditions within the New Zealand business environment, many of the AP’s traditional corporate sponsors began to move their head offices off-shore, making it more difficult to secure long-term donors. Further, ripple effects of the collapse of companies like Enron in North America and Parmalat in Europe were felt in the South Pacific. In the AP’s case
the call for greater financial accountability came from government agencies and trusts that provide 25% of the orchestra’s funding. Local body and central government funding bodies were required to show increased accountability to their constituents and in turn created substantial measurements for their clients to ensure accountability was robust.

Similarly, existing corporate sponsors, who provided 15% of the orchestra’s funding, were held to the same scrutiny by their shareholders, and donors expected assurances that their private investments were going to be well managed. All this was summarised in the question asked by key stakeholders of the orchestra: ‘do a large group of professional musicians possess the commercial skills to satisfy these requirements?’

The external demands for the orchestra to be smarter and leaner compounded in 2003 with internal strife over decision making processes. It is to this period, 2001 to 2005 that we now turn.

An Orchestra in Crisis

For much of its first 20 years the Auckland Philharmonia operated under the directorship of guest conductors. However, as the orchestra moved to improve its artistic standards, it became obvious to most that a permanent music director would enhance the musical development of the orchestra, and at the same time provide a figurehead that represented the orchestra locally and internationally. This would ensure that the same conductor would work consistently with the musicians for a large portion of the year, making it possible to concentrate on specific performance issues that the continual flow of guest conductors were unable to address. In 2001, the first Music Director’s (MD) appointment was met with near universal acclaim by the musicians, managers and other stakeholders.

As the new MD began working on artistic issues, many players felt the pressure to either lift their standards or face disciplinary action. In the main, it was the stalwarts of the cooperative ideal that experienced the most anxiety. Newcomers, eager to see the orchestra’s growth in stature, saw that giving greater control to the MD and artistic committees would guarantee this development. They started pressing for changes to the cooperative structure to ensure that authority was vested in these key roles believing that in doing so, musical quality would improve.

In principle most players conceded that these changes would improve standards. However, this resolve was tested by two events that happened in close succession. Firstly, when the MD’s contract came up for renewal in late 2002, a group of musicians, now labelled as traditionalists, dissented. In response the MD insisted that unless there was 100% support he would not renew his contract. After much lobbying, all musicians confirmed their support in writing. Second, in early 2003, a probationary principal player came up for ratification. The Audition Committee (which included the MD) was unanimous in recommending tenure, but a meeting of the Society overturned this recommendation. This move on the part of the traditionalists incensed the players wanting structural change—the self-styled progressives. With a split core, the stage was now set for a battle of internecine proportions between the traditionalists and progressives.
Independently, at the same time, the financial environment began to tighten. Constraints were felt as corporate sponsors became more demanding yet less forthcoming as long-term donors. Similarly, the 4 cities and 3 semi-rural councils that comprise metropolitan Auckland resisted increasing their parsimonious funding. Auckland City Council was the most generous, providing the majority share, whilst the remaining councils either gave little, or in the case of one, nothing at all, even though audiences travelled from all jurisdictions. Added to this, Creative New Zealand, the agency through which the national government funded the orchestra, and indeed the AP’s primary source of monies, declined to increase its support at the level the AP required to meet increased operating costs.

As a result, protagonists from the Board of Advisors pressed for governance change. They considered the cooperative to be outmoded on two scores. They maintained that funding agencies were threatening to withdraw support unless the orchestra transformed its structure. Also, as the orchestra became increasingly balkanised, the musicians showed their inability to govern by engaging in a war of attrition that risked the survival of the enterprise.

As a result, a new constitution was proposed that vested authority in a Board of Directors comprising of 9 members: 4 elected players, 4 community members and an independent chair. Two committees of players would oversee artistic and musician issues, and report to the Society, who could still overturn decisions. The Society would continue to meet monthly, and annually would elect its 4 representatives and approve the chair. The revisions to the constitution were passed by a majority in July 2003. Hopes were high that the orchestra had survived this turbulent time, especially given that the new constitution was modelled on the Louisiana Philharmonia which had shown that this structure could work.

This was not to be the case. The orchestra remained divided and governance problems were not solved. On the orchestra front, the MD empowered in November 2003 by a newly-ratified artistic complaints process providing him with a 33% weighted vote, issued letters to 3 musicians raising concerns of artistic quality. Angered by this, and the impersonal communications method the MD employed, the traditionalists struck back. They considered the MD had gone beyond his brief and stepped outside New Zealand employment law and practices. They also felt that giving him any weighted influence to ultimately dismiss players struck at the heart of their employment rights. Although in 2 of the cases, satisfactory resolution was found, in 1 case, the musician took legal action, emboldened by support from the traditionalists.

These events distracted the newly formed board. Instead of defining its responsibilities, functions and protocols, and overseeing the implementation of the 2003 constitution, they focused on the almost daily developments within the orchestra. The increasing litigious environment became toxic, with relationships within the orchestra being marked by rampant vitriol. Furthermore some confidential information from board meetings was leaked to the players by members not equipped with governance duty-of-care protocols, thereby destroying the ability of the board to engage in open discussion in camera. As a result of this loss of confidence in the board’s ability to successfully manage within the new system, members of the traditionalist camp pressed to hold re-elections of all officers only 6 months after they had taken office, thus signalling a vote of no confidence in the Board and in the Society’s two new committees.
Thus, by April 2004, the AP was facing a costly legal dispute, with a dysfunctional Board and an embittered Society unable to ride out the consequences. Furthermore, financial forecasts looked bleak, and, given its existing funding arrangements, the AP could only exist at best for one more year. It seemed as though the orchestra was set for cataclysmic collapse.

At the behest of the Chairman of the Board, a non-aligned third party was asked to intervene. This individual, a former Chairperson of the Board of Advisors, known and trusted by all the players and highly respected in the community, assessed the situation, suspended the activities of the orchestra committees, and recommended the appointment of an Executive Chairperson to whom the Board, Society and Management delegated its authority for a period of approximately 6 months.

Here we pause in the story and ask: in spite of the initial support of the musicians, the goodwill of the funding agencies and the willingness of managers to work within the changed environment, why didn’t the 2003 Constitution work? We consider that although the situation required change, the musicians were not emotionally or politically willing to make the leap from self-management to delegated management. They were not ready to let go of control.

**Diagnosing the Crisis**

Several elements emerge in our diagnosis of the crisis. On the surface, the new structure proposed in 2003 looked feasible. The Louisiana exemplar gave an indication of its workability, yet in Auckland it was a spectacular failure. Why?

With the benefit of hindsight, there were several elements that contributed to its ineffectiveness. Firstly the orchestra was operating in a fiscally insecure environment. The hand-to-mouth way of functioning developed an atmosphere of insecurity making it possible for disaffected players from both camps, and the Board, to take this as an opportunity to further their grievances thereby poisoning residual goodwill.

Secondly, while the structure looked achievable, change management procedures were not well taken care of. Policies and protocols under which the two committees would manage the artistic and programming affairs of the orchestra were not established before the new structure was set in place. Little thought was given to exactly how these committees could be empowered to act on the Society’s behalf without decisions being re-litigated by the whole group. Added to this, the committees themselves were not populated by leaders astute enough to objectively deal with their responsibilities.

Thirdly those counselling the Orchestra from the Advisory Board drove through the changes but did not stay involved long enough to see them embedded. They considered that structural change itself would release the purse strings of reluctant funders thereby solving the artistic problems, and once the new constitution was ratified took the opportunity to resign.

Fourthly, because of this power vacuum, the new Board, rather than keeping its distance from routine issues, became involved at artistic and management levels and attempted to deal with questions it had already delegated. Furthermore it failed to establish and maintain open lines of communication with the Society and other stakeholder groups.
such as the Friends of the Orchestra and the Guild. Thus, groups essential to the ongoing health of the enterprise, became disenfranchised. So rather than focusing on raising the orchestra's profile among potential sponsors and ensuring an increase in funding, the Board became emasculated by troubles within the organisation.

Finally, the General Manager (GM), though well-versed in the running of a professional orchestra and fluent in the needs and motivations of musicians, lacked any experience in the demarcation between Board and management functions, and was therefore unsuccessful in keeping the roles from overlapping. With the financial strangulation, all parties were looking for someone to hold responsible for any financial loss, yet the structure of the organisation still did not provide the GM with the authority (or permission) to exercise overt commercial good sense. A further employment dispute surrounding a staff member who had become entangled with the player's litigation created additional strain at management level. A climate of hostility existed within the orchestra itself with members being openly rude to one another and a loss of confidence and solidarity became apparent at all levels of the organisation.

How, though, can an organisation enmeshed in conflict as the AP, move beyond this dysfunctional state and discover a new sense of its own importance and place within the nation’s artistic milieu? In what follows we step back from the despair of the crises and show that this period of intense instability has been a necessary interlude in preparation for its growth to a respected orchestra towards world class standing. To do this we explore Kenneth Burke's use of the symbolic as a means of social analysis.

**A Wider View of Culture**

Here we pose a theoretical view on the recent events in the AP and offer it as an extension to the practitioner-oriented diagnosis of the previous section. By doing so, we attempt to connect theory and practice through Kenneth Burke’s notion of logology.

Burke’s definition of logology as ‘words about words’ (Burke, 1961, p.1) indicates that behind all human action are rhetorical symbols that inform and even guide behaviour. This view holds that human stories, like the one we have just recounted about the Auckland Philharmonia, act as guides to social organisation indicating that ‘our narrational identities give us a sense of direction and orient us with respect to a system of values’ (Carter, 1997, p.344). In this way, we not only tell stories, but our stories also tell us.

Language therefore is double-edged, or in Burke-speak *bicameral* (double-chambered). Hence stories are recounted within a specific time-space dimension—in the case of the AP, its history over the last 25 years—and yet are paradoxically time-less. Therefore the time-bound idiosyncratic story and the timeless generic essence of the story mean that ‘language is already operating in two modes at once, the linear and holistic’ (Carter, 1992, p.6). Language shifts occur, according to Burke, as we toggle between transcendental and analogue applications with meanings that are both ‘supernatural’ and ‘natural’ (Burke, 1961, p.8).

Taking this further, Burke suggests that words imply something other, inherent yet silent, within the narrative. Burke writes:
It is my notion that following such cues, we can finally develop a considerable body of conceptual instruments for shifting back and forth between ‘philosophic’ and ‘narrative’ terminologies of motives, between temporal and logical kinds of sequence, thereby finding it easy to translate discussion of ‘principles’ or ‘beginnings’ back and forth into either of these styles, and thereby greatly cutting down the distance between poetic and philosophic styles of statement. (Burke, 1961, p.33)

Burke’s schema offers a lens that helps make sense of the symbolic actions inherent in narratives. Therefore ‘a logological approach can help us understand the dynamics of such symbolic action through order, pollution, guilt, purification through either mortification or victimage, and redemption’ (Smudde, 2004). Following Burke then, we propose that the AP story demonstrates not only the dramatic breakdown of systems and relationships, but also the promise of renewal and development.

Couched in logological terms, the restructuring crises in the AP over the last 4 years can be attributed to a period of pollution and the assignation of guilt. Following the halcyon years where the orchestra grew in artistic confidence out of the collapse of its predecessor, the time had come to let go of the rigorous application of cooperative ideals. New structures and systems were called for to cope with the new economic and governmental environment. There was little incentive, though, to do so on the part of the traditionalists. That is, until the crises of recent years gave the enterprise logical and symbolic reasons to change.

The turbulence the AP experienced is therefore consistent with the need to find someone or something to blame. And, as Allen Carter illustrates in his analysis of Burke’s rhetorical turn, whilst in search of that person or thing, conflicts become contagious and can easily spread beyond the boarders of the original incident, threatening the destruction of the enterprise.

Unchecked [conflict] results in the disintegration of the community. Eventually the original object of contention is lost in a seemingly endless cycle of attack and counterattack. (Carter, 1992, p.14)

To move, though, beyond the conflict and to make the necessary structural changes, a scapegoat needed to be found who could be blamed for the organisation’s inability to transform quickly enough to deal with the new challenges. The scapegoat, Burke argues, allows groups to shed the past (Burke, 1957) thereby offering redemption.

In subscribing to Burke’s schema, the story of the AP’s struggle is therefore a story of scapegoating where blame can be attributed to someone or something that can bear the blame for failure and offer the hope of new life. Within the struggle we can identify a multiplicity of scapegoats that bore culpability for the new constitution’s failure.

The Society and its inability to grasp the realities of the new artistic environment being sought to be imposed by the newer international progressives was reproached. Furthermore, given the more stringent governance environment being sought by external stakeholders, the Society as represented by the traditionalists became the target of blame by the progressives and some funding agencies. It represented the old way that
inhibited the orchestra from growing beyond its regional identity to taking its place on the world stage.
The management team and the General Manager in particular were also held responsible. The confusion of roles between being a servant of the Board and the driver of change left a hiatus which resulted in an escalation of the acrimonious environment. Similarly, the GM was perceived to be aligned with the progressives thereby tainted in her objectivity.

Additionally, the Board of Directors were seen to be culpable for not keeping their attention focused on areas of governance and strategy, and for not communicating frequently and in a style regarded by musicians and support groups as appropriate. The new Board had many inexperienced members not trained in governance and this immaturity gave cause for widespread criticism.

Similarly, the Music Director inappropriately launched official artistic complaints that led to a period of industrial action. While these artistic deficiencies had been signalled for some time, the manner in which they were handled escalated the conflict. Furthermore, his alignment with the progressive group exacerbated the unfounded belief that the structural changes were due to a conspiracy of people that sought the demise of the Cooperative.

Individual players also became the target for scapegoating. The one musician, who took the legal action, was seen by some to be responsible for the orchestra’s plight. Although the Employment Relations Authority confirmed the status of the members of the orchestra as independent contractors, thereby dismissing this player’s complaint, much damage was done to the working relationships of the musicians in the process.

Beyond the scapegoat, Burke’s schema also proposes that the destructive cycle of retribution can be disrupted and that redemption is possible. We consider that for the original players of the AP to let go of the past and for new governance regimes to become embedded, all stakeholders now needed to move beyond past difficulties to embrace the new era. This shift anticipates the musicians moving from owner-operators to a hands-off position where elected representatives would act on their behalf. In effect they were required to both let go and ironically let come.

**Letting Go: Letting Come**

At the time of writing, the new structures are still being negotiated among the musicians. However, in terms the symbolic environment, in order for the AP to move beyond its current crises and embrace new ways of envisaging ownership, we think all its members and support groups are required to let go of firmly held positions that once were useful but now no longer offer solace. We consider that three redemptive qualities are necessary in this journey, and are inherent in the notion of letting go.

The first of these elements is letting come. Here we pick up on Senge, Scharmer, Jaworski, and Flowers (2004) in their plea for examining new ways of doing business. They note that it is essential for tomorrow’s business leaders to surrender control. In doing so, these authors claim that organisations can become what they envisage.
In this regard the current tensions within the AP can be reduced to the urge to control, maintain order, and to homogenise in order to attract funding from an inherently conservative sector (Wichterman, 1999) and to pursue a doctrinaire line concerning governance, be it cooperative or corporate. However, Stephen Linstead notes that in environments where homogeneity dominates, ‘true communication, which depends on communal effusion, becomes restricted, destroying creativity and collective effervescence and replacing them with calculation and purposiveness, work and the rule of law’ (Linstead, 2000, p.79). Thus the paradoxical qualities of letting go and letting come (Senge et al., 2004, p.96), are qualities that enable those who move beyond habitual and homogenising behaviour to embrace creativity and innovation.

While in principle the members of the AP understood the need for a different kind of organisation that gave the worker/musician a voice, they failed to grasp the complexities of the new environment. To achieve sustainability, they needed to step back, give over control of the cooperative’s affairs to specialists who would manage the organisation on their behalf, and focus on their core business of orchestral performance.

A second vital quality is humility. In this regard Jim Collins proposes that there are two essential yet paradoxical qualities of leadership that lead to greatness, namely ‘humility and fierce resolve’ (Collins, 2001, p.67). These traits, which define what Collins calls ‘level 5 leaders’, belie the notion that to successfully transform an organisation, leaders need to be charismatic, magnetic and controlling personalities. He argues that ‘level 5 leaders are a study in duality: modest and willful, shy and fearless’ (Collins, 2001, p.70).

We consider that given that leadership resides in all the members of the enterprise, from the rank-and-file through section principals, conductor, management staff along with board of directors and funding agents, that these two leadership qualities would not only enhance the orchestra but ensure it meets its goal of being recognized as world class. The ‘inner intensity’ (Collins, 2001, p.72) that marks level 5 leaders is also a highly prized quality of the orchestral musician. We think that if members of the AP were to translate qualities necessary for successful musical performance into their management practice, organisational transformation can become a possibility.

A third quality we see as vital is that of offering and receiving forgiveness. The past 4 years have been traumatic for many. However, if the orchestra is to move forward, old scores must be settled through letting go, rather than exacting revenge. Here an alternative musical art form, jazz, shows the way.

In his descriptions, Frank Barrett claims that successful jazz performance relies on a singular quality of ‘aesthetic surrender’ (Barrett, 2000, p.237). Within the jazz medium, mistakes are essential, with so-called wrong notes being built into the texture of a piece. New directions can be picked up from these errors, so long as there is an affirming and forgiving environment (Barrett, 2000, p.239). As with successful jazz improvisation, the way out of this snowballing cycle is through forgiveness (Carter, 1992, p.17) and the desire to move beyond the impasse.

**Conclusions**

Our story of the Auckland Philharmonia mirrors many organisations in crisis. Underlying our case study are questions regarding how organisations move on and morph from a
structure that was suitable in a specific time and place to another that reflects contemporary needs. Arts organisations are vulnerable during changing times because of the nature of their work and the subtle balance that must be achieved between artistic and business ideals.

Therefore to make certain of survival within the arts milieu stakeholders are obligated to work for the sustainability of artistic enterprises on behalf of the community. To ensure not only creative development but also growth in audience numbers, orchestras are required to continually examine the way they operate.

In this paper we have identified 3 primary areas of concern—artistic, structural and financial. We have provided a possible way forward by suggesting a symbolic dimension to the problem of moving the Auckland Philharmonia beyond being an owner-operated orchestra to embrace a wider community. The case study provides cues to other firms, particularly professional partnerships both inside and outside the artistic world seeking to undergo a change programme. Fundamental to the change is the way crisis is viewed. Here we suggest that it was the crisis itself that provoked sustainable change. Therefore we hold that attention to both the pragmatic and symbolic elements is essential for changes to become embedded.

We consider that the paradoxical phenomenon of letting go provides the essential impetus to move beyond strongly held opinions. Letting go in this case, though, does not represent passive resignation but rather a proactive decision to withdraw from the dogmatic adherence to entrenched positions of ownership. By taking this significant step, all agents within an enterprise are free to anticipate future directions optimistically. Therefore as in the Auckland Philharmonia’s case, if the participants let go of their reign/rein with both determination and humility, space is created for the emergence of new and liberating forms of operating.
References


