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**Managing Amidst Mosaic**
Integrating Values and Professionalism in the Nonprofit Arts

**Introduction**

The Magic Gardens[1] emerge from within a bustling commercial block on the outskirts of Center City Philadelphia. To one side is a tiny hair salon boasting $20 healing cleanses on a yellowed sign, while a massive Whole Foods dominates the next corner. Between them sit the Gardens, a tangled labyrinth of bottles, glass shards, tiles, wheels, and clay figurines, fused together with a layer of crusted grout. It curls above the fence that separates it from the street, offering passers-by whimsical, undulating vistas and messages. A wall around the corner proclaims: "Philadelphia is the center of the art world." The Gardens' presence is heralded by the glint of tiny mirrors further down the block; a bright mosaicked mural is hidden in the courtyard of the Waters Memorial African Methodist Episcopal Church. Many other mosaicked walls are nearby—one, bursting forth across the street, is dominated by a staring face and dog-shaped tiles.

Behind the dazzling façade, the Gardens are part museum, part shrine, altogether a giant walk-in artwork. Two cheerful, stylish twenty-somethings staff the desk, which, like everything else, is surrounded by colorful ceramic mosaics. They inquire, "are you interested in walking through?" Every inch of the space is covered with images—the two interior galleries are filled with framed articles and sketches (some of which are for sale), along with the omnipresent mosaic. Outside, twisting caverns of stuff fill three levels with words, phrases, faces, bodies, and familiar and strange household objects sprinkled throughout -- all embedded in cement. Here, an elaborately carved altar, there, dozens of dinner plates suspended on their edges, elsewhere, the outline of a naked man with wild hair.

Though absent, *he*—Isaiah Zagar, the artist who created the Gardens—is a constant, both in texts placed throughout the space and in the conversations of visitors. A young male visitor muses, "He has to draw this out and *then* put it in!" while a group of women passing by on the street comment, "he's still working on stuff." The framed newspaper articles in the gallery space alternately hail him as a genius and community man or as a selfish "well of insanity." Everyone seems confused about for whom the space exists. Is it for *him*? A middle-aged woman tells me, "My head is spinning—I'd hate to be in his head." A blue laminated sign cautions guests: "Do NOT put notes in the bottles." Is it for *us*—the click-click of teens taking selfies, tourists

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[1] I will refer to Philadelphia's Magic Gardens in this paper alternately as "PMG" and "The Gardens." I will use "PMG" to refer to the organization as a whole, and "The Gardens" to refer to the installation itself.

snapping shots, and aficionados 'practicing photography,' couples' surreptitious embraces and mother-daughter ribbing? Or is it for some other purpose entirely?

To be sure, the Gardens *used* to mean something else, to Isaiah Zagar as well as to Philadelphia more broadly. Zagar and his wife settled in the South Street neighborhood in 1968, opening a folk art gallery, the Eyes Gallery, fewer than 10 blocks from the Gardens' eventual site. Signs and brochures at PMG proudly proclaim that Zagar's work focuses on fighting for "our families, our community, our ideals of a beautiful life: spiritual, cultural, and healthy living." Zagar initially created mosaic murals on dilapidated buildings (beginning with the Eyes Gallery) as part of the "South Street Renaissance" that transformed the area, then marked by urban decay, into a "popular cultural center"[2] – his murals now dot alleys and walls all over the city. Work began on the Gardens in 1994, and continued for the next decade. When in the midst of this (and neighborhood gentrification), the owner of the lot that the Gardens occupied decided to sell the space for development, thousands of locals (as well as mayor John Street's City Council) successfully petitioned to save the installation; Zagar accumulated enough donations to buy the lot from the developers. PMG concurrently incorporated as a volunteer-run nonprofit museum in 2004 with an initial goal simply to preserve the space. A part-time executive director was hired in 2007, and the first professional staff member started working in 2009; that same year, the PMG mission was revised to include an educational component. Today PMG is both familiar and strange. On a sunny Friday a college student quipped, "it's the most ridiculous thing I've seen in my whole life." As a retiree remarked to me, "it'd look awful if I did it." Its museum trappings lie in framed artwork, cheerful signage, educational programs, evening events, and a salaried professional staff. PMG now employs a full-time executive director, while Isaiah's involvement continues to shape the organization.

This ethnographic study of PMG illuminates the day-to-day considerations and realities of an organization transitioning from founder to executive director control in order to explore the relationship between leadership transition and nonprofit organizational formalization. Through descriptions of three settings—the built environment, the public space, and behind the scenes—I will illustrate how, through the process of leadership transition, field-wide instrumental

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[2] The degree to which Isaiah was an instigator of or simply a participant in the "South Street Renaissance" is not clear, though PMG tours attribute the neighborhood's revitalization to his work.

structures and organization-specific expressive elements[3] at PMG are organized into an integrated system of rules and guidelines for the organization. This integrated system is enacted in interaction between staff members—as I will show, it is manifested in employee behavior and talk, emerging organizational regulations, and the space itself.

This case is particularly relevant to recent arguments about formalization in the US nonprofit sector. According to Hwang and Powell (2009) due to pressures from key stakeholders, competition, political drives toward accountability, and the rise of venture philanthropy and social entrepreneurship "one sees a broad, seismic shift toward organizational rationalization underway in the nonprofit sector" (271-2). Professional management practices and the ability to measure results have become increasingly important in nonprofits' efforts to secure funding (Alexander 2000, Suarez 2010). Additionally, Weisbrod (1998), writing on the trend toward commercialization in the nonprofit sector, suggests that as nonprofits engage in revenue-generating activity they will emulate their for-profit counterparts, eventually altering their nature and "undermin[ing] the fundamental justification for their own special social and economic role" (17). Similarly, Salamon (2012) asserts that a widespread movement toward professionalization in the nonprofit sector, defined as the expansion of paid staff and rise of nonprofit managers "trained in the techniques of rational management, such as strategic planning, management by objectives, segmentation of operations […] and the use of metrics" (54), has "at least partially" displaced voluntarism as a cornerstone of nonprofit activity (16) and been accused of constraining artistic innovation (54). While we know in broad strokes about such changes as they are taking place in the nonprofit sector, we have less information about the on-the-ground realities of formalization – what the professionalization process looks like as it unfolds in any particular organization, and how leadership transition facilitates organizational formalization and shapes how it occurs. By applying an immersive ethnographic methodology, the present study aims to provide such a glimpse of the formalization process in action.

While many funders see formalization as essential to organizational survival, Frumkin (2009) inquires;

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[3] This distinction is drawn from Frumkin (2009), which distinguishes two ideas of the nonprofit sector's value: (1) as an "important instrument for the accomplishment of tasks that communities view as important" and (2) "because it allows individuals to express their values and commitment through work, volunteer activities, and donations" (23).

> [Has] the trend toward professionalization within nonprofit organizations […] been entirely salutary or […] [has it] not begun to rob nonprofit activity of some of the individual values and commitments that are so critical [?] It also leads to the question of whether there is a way to operate nonprofit and voluntary organizations that maximizes the expressive value-driven side of these organizations (2009:100).

I will respond to this quandary by positing PMG's leadership transition as facilitating the blending of instrumental and expressive forces in the nonprofit. Elaborating this idea, the PMG case will be used to posit a conceptual framework for the development of such integrated systems in nonprofit organizations undergoing leadership transitions.[4] What follows is based on approximately 60 hours of participant observation at PMG between 2014 and 2016, interviews with all current PMG managerial staff as well as hourly staff, board members, volunteers, a former executive director, and Zagar and his wife Julia Zagar, and a review of several internal documents.[5]

## Instrumental vs. expressive in the built environment

One November Sunday there was an event at PMG—a PECO Family Jam.[6] It was the last such event of the season, before the weather turned cold and visitorship to PMG dropped. To find the event one wove past throngs of people filling the entryway, through the two interior galleries crowded with people, to the very back of the building. The crowd thinned there; two banquet tables surrounded by folding chairs and smocked in red plastic were tucked away next to

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[4] I will use the terms "instrumentalization," "rationalization," "formalization," and "professionalization" somewhat interchangeably in this paper. These terms each have distinct meanings but are all utilized in extant literature to describe the process I discuss here, in which nonprofits form sets of durable structures, processes, and divisions in efforts to demonstrate their economic efficiency and the measurable benefit they provide to society. According to Hwang and Powell (2009), rationalization refers to "the integration of formalized roles and rules […] entailing the construction of nonprofits as "actors" with clear identities [and…] calls for wider use of strategic planning" (272). Formalization, thus, is part and parcel of rationalization, referring to the solidification of organizational roles, routines, and rules, along with the adoption of official IRS classifications. As noted earlier, Salamon (2012) defines professionalization in similar terms--the expansion of paid staff and rise of nonprofit managers "trained in the techniques of rational management, such as strategic planning, management by objectives, segmentation of operations […] and the use of metrics" (54). Finally, Frumkin (2009) claims that an instrumental approach to nonprofit activity sees nonprofits as an "important instrument for the accomplishment of tasks that communities view as important" (23). Processes of rationalization, professionalization, and formalization as ineherently intertwined and co-constituting can be thought to make up the apparatus that supports how nonprofits-as-instruments function.

[5] Documents reviewed included a strategic plan, organizational bylaws, an employee handbook, data from a staff survey, two evaluation reports, board member orientation documents, board meeting minutes, organizational budget and financial documents, and a documentary about Isaiah Zagar made by his son, Jeremiah Zagar.

[6] These hands-on, family-oriented events, funded by PECO (an energy company), take place every second Sunday of the month.

a glass garage door leading out to an alley. Four women—two volunteers, a professional staff member, and a Garden Guide[7]—occupied the tables, idly painting and stamping on small rectangular sheets of paper. They were acting out the day's activity, which focused on creating watercolor paintings that incorporated stamped images. "I'd be happy if no kid ever came," brunette volunteer Rhonda joked halfheartedly. "I can do watercolors for four hours." Renee,[8] a Garden Guide and student in museum studies, anxiously fiddled with her iPhone. "I'm waiting for an email." Silence reigned for about fifteen minutes, the buzz of the nearby crowds wafting into the space, punctuated by occasional light conversation.

"Oh, hi, Isaiah! Am I in your way? What are you up to?" Rhonda was startled as a lanky, elderly man in sandals with leathery skin and a rumpled blue shirt ambled into the room, making for a side door. Isaiah Zagar, the creator of the Gardens, replied cryptically, as everyone sat a little straighter. "Entertaining, being entertained…Oh! This is your painting?" he inquired, peering down at the paper in front of Rhonda. "It's wonderful!" She nodded, gesturing towards a bowl of rubber stamps and then inquiring, "Did you make these stamps?"

"I had them made," Isaiah responded.
"But from your drawings?"
"Of course."
"I was looking for the one of your face, but I couldn't find it," she volunteered.

Bending over the table, he picked up a wooden stamp. "This one is supposed to be Julia" he mused. "And what are you doing here?" he asked. The other volunteer was startled. "Oh, just painting over here," she breathed. Satisfied, he slowly walked away, back to the melee.

Rhonda later explained Isaiah's frequent presence at PMG. "He lives two blocks away," she said, pointing out the garage door. "This is his driveway, and he still has a studio upstairs." Renee told me about her last encounter. "He was just sitting outside, letting people ask questions. I think as he ages he likes that even more." (Likes what?) "There's an article inside that says, '[Zagar] likes talking most about himself.' And he added in pencil on the side, 'and other people.' That's so true. He does like hearing about others, and then he relates to them by talking about himself."

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[7] An hourly position at PMG. Garden Guides staff the front desk, give tours, and assist visitors.

[8] Names have been changed for all staff members who could not be easily identified via the PMG website.

In the late afternoon the red tables filled up with kids. Next to them stood a wall hung with drawings. "Have you seen them?" Rhonda pointed to a stamped image of a man's face embedded in a page. "There's one that is Julia," she continued, pointing to a stamped female face—Isaiah's wife. "His artwork is all like that…kind of crazy." Amidst the tours, events, placards and art activities that mark PMG as a professionalized museum environment, Isaiah's familial details permeate the space. A tour guide described this saturation one Saturday. According to him, Isaiah saw the Gardens as a diary of his life, filling it with the faces, bodies, and names of those close to him. While the Gardens grew from a personal project into a community good, with neighbors donating leftover tiles from kitchen and bathroom projects for Isaiah to embed into the walls, this personal expression continues to permeate the space. Isaiah's family history is also the centerpiece of tours and text at PMG, and is reflected in the discourse of staff and visitors. A 2011 evaluation asserted that visiting the Gardens made people more likely to participate in a creative activity and to explore other mosaic murals in the neighborhood, but it also claimed their desire to meet and learn more about Isaiah.[9]

Frumkin's (2009) views about the expressive versus instrumental forces in nonprofits are instructive in analyzing this case. Frumkin argues that "the value of nonprofit and vountary action is [either] conceptualized as residing in the instrumental character of the outcomes that are generated for society or in the inherently expressive quality of the activities themselves that reward those who undertake them" by providing opportunities for workers to express strongly held beliefs, convictions, and values (19-20).[10] Frumkin asserts that while both interpretations are valid and should be considered together, professionalization in the nonprofit sector has "brought with it a general dimunition in the eclecticism that lies at the heart of the expressive dimension of the sector" (102). That is, the rise of professionalism as a "rational myth" in the nonprofit sector—as something organizations ought to emulate in order to be perceived as legitimate in their environment (Meyer and Rowan 1977)—causes friction with the expressive, that is, values-oriented cores of many nonprofit organizations. Frumkin warns against the potentially detrimental effects of such friction; "nonprofit organizations that do not emphasize, promote, and position themselves around values may have a hard time succeeding in an

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[9] While the methods and conclusions of this evaluation should not be relied upon, the prevalence of these responses in a relatively large sample suggest their salience in the PMG visitor experience.

[10] Frumkin's theory is, in its nature, functionalist in that it focuses on the overarching "purposes" of nonprofit organizations. However, in this paper I treat expressive and instrumental impulses in nonprofit organizations not as "purposes," per say, but more as co-present forces in these organizations.

increasingly competitive and turbulent sector" (104); thus, a "central challenge for nonprofit managers is to become good at fostering both expressive and instrumental activity" (125).

Other theoretical and empirical work similarly predicts tension in the encounter between organizational expressiveness and a drive toward rationalization. The new institutionalist tradition in organizational analysis, exemplified by Meyer and Rowan (1977), argues that organizations adopt institutionalized structures (in this case, professional structures and practices) in order to be perceived as legitimate, and then de-couple these structures from the actual work in order to maintain prior orientations and arrangements (in this case, expressive and values-oriented practices).[11] Max Weber, writing on the relationship between charismatic and bureaucratic authority, argues that rationalizing a charismatic regime entails the loss of its charismatic character – charismatic regimes that have been rationalized evolve thereby into bureaucratic regimes.[12]  Turning to empirical work, Weisbrod (1998), writing on the trend toward commercialization in the nonprofit sector, suggests that as nonprofits engage in revenue-generating activity they will emulate their for-profit counterparts, eventually  "undermin[ing] the fundamental justification for their own special social and economic role" (17). In a study of organizational values in nonprofit theaters and the relationships between these values and organizational relationships with clients, Voss, Cable, and Voss (2000) identify tensions between competing values such as artistic and market-oriented approaches. Finally, Powell and Friedkin's 1986 study of factors that influence decision-making in public television found that organizational dependence on outside funding compromised the autonomy of the form, content, and goals of work. In their words, "most sources of money have strings attached. Each funding source has its own biases about what it wants to support and what it expects to receive in return" – following the resource dependency tradition in organizational analysis, when organizations depend on others for resources, they may experience pressure to adopt funders' goals and strategies as their own (262).

In contrast to these predictions, other studies from within organizational sociology suggest that tension is not the only option. Katherine Chen's 2009 ethnography of Burning Man

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[11] However, Meyer and Rowan's arguments are of limited applicability to the PMG case. Their theories primarily focus on large, complex organizations who respond to fragmented institutional environments by creating new divisions or splintering existing ones, rather than undertaking organization-wide decoupling.

[12] Weber defines a charismatic leader as one whose powers are attributed to their divine or otherwise exemplary character. While this characterization is distinct in many ways from the PMG case, Isaiah Zagar can be thought of, at least loosely, as a charismatic leader.

showed this organization's integration of bureaucratic and collectivist organizational structures and associated practices, and Catherine Turco's 2016 ethnography of a Silicon Valley company showed a similar hybridization of a bureaucratic and "post-bureaucratic" networked organizing form. Both studies show such hybridization as worked out in the course of ongoing interactions between staff and managers within the organization, rather than as directly imposed from above. In a 2006 paper, Chen and O'Mahony explained this process in more detail--via ongoing discourse and interaction, organizational members and managers "selectively synthesize" elements of competing logics in order to support organizational functioning, rather than embarking on the wholesale integration of competing organizational logics. Their study, which compares the Burning Man and open source communities, unpacks the way that members of these two groups engaged in active deliberation to selectively synthesize elements from two logics: a logic of expression, oriented toward collective interests and participation, and a logic of production, oriented toward stability and standardization. They hypothesize that certain kinds of organizations may be more likely to accomplish such synthesis, for example those in less-established fields and those where a single logic is not dominant. Stark (2009) espouses the benefits of such hybridization in his theory of heterarchy, a highly interdependent and network-oriented organizational form that is premised on the ongoing interaction of disparate evaluative principles for assessing organizational work. This ongoing interaction, according to Stark, produces what he calls "creative friction" – innovation occurs through the recurring production of opportunities to break up and reconfigure taken-for-granted knowledge.

In review, some prevailing theoretical and empirical work suggests that we should expect tension between expressive, value-oriented organizational elements-structures, practices, and discourses--and instrumental ones. Other work suggests that integration of such competing logics is possible, and directs our attention to ongoing intra-organizational interaction as the venue by which such hybridization may be worked out. As it undergoes formalization as a nonprofit, then, to what degree does PMG exhibit tension between expressive and instrumental logics for organizing? And how might attention to day-to-day organizational life reveal opportunities for and efforts toward hybridization?

**Expressive vs. instrumental behind the scenes**

During an interview at the PMG offices on a cold December afternoon, Emily, the

director, said that when PMG became a nonprofit, the staff had to work hard to distance the

organization from Isaiah's reputation.[13] PMG's original mission was to save the Gardens, but it

went nonprofit "because Isaiah needed to be able to accept donations to save the space, but he

didn't want to be taxed on it." She chuckled. In the beginning people did not want to support

PMG because,

> "They felt like it was going into Isaiah's pocket […] [some people think he] is a
> polarizing character."

In order to succeed, Emily said, PMG had to cultivate a voice that was distinct from Isaiah's, or,

in her words, "shift the reputation from Isaiah himself and more to his body of work […] [and

the] idea that anyone can make art, that art is vital and important and can energize our

communities."[14] Julia Zagar, Isaiah's wife, put it slightly differently: "Isaiah used to be working

there full-time, now it's relegated to certain times and places." The shift was articulated in

changes to the organization's mission statement. Whereas originally the mission was:

> Philadelphia's Magic Gardens (PMG) preserves the artworks of Isaiah Zagar and
> educates the public about mosaic and folk art. By making art accessible, PMG
> aims to foster civic engagement, community, beautification, and artistic
> collaboration.

implying that the preservation of Isaiah's work came first and education second, in 2011, the

order of priorities was reversed:

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[13] This impulse is instructive in elucidating the particularities of Isaiah Zagar as PMG's founder. While Zagar, as the Gardens' creator, undeniably started the organization, according to staff members he did not envision himself as an administrator. Indeed, as Zagar himself put it in an interview, "I never envisioned any way in which [the Gardens] would become public." In Emily's words, "Isaiah was in control before the Gardens was open to the public, but he has never been in a role where he was dealing with any sort of daily operations. Even then he wanted to be hands off. He didn't conceptualize that it would be a museum and open to the public." Instead, while perennially interested in organizational decisions, Zagar was primarily concerned with supporting his artistic practice and advancing as an artist—an executive director (albeit a part-time one) was hired for the organization concurrently with the advent of regular activities. In that Isaiah exists as the animating spirit of PMG while his goals diverged from running PMG-as-nonprofit, then, Zagar is distinct from a traditional organizational founder. Nevertheless, PMG's history since its inception is a story of Zagar's diminishing power in the organization; as such, the "transition from founder-to-director control" frame is appropriate to the paper.

[14] This distancing of PMG from Isaiah's personal particularities is unexpected in light of Gary Alan Fine's work on outsider art, which points to the artist's biography –specifically, their lack of formal artistic training--as a key element in constructing and displaying an "authentic" identity in the self-taught art world (Fine 2004: 275).

> Philadelphia's Magic Gardens (PMG) inspires creativity and community
> engagement by educating the public about folk, mosaic, and visionary art. PMG
> preserves, interprets, and provides access to Isaiah Zagar's unique mosaic art
> environment and his public murals.

The nonprofit organizational form has also constrained the close relationship between Isaiah and PMG. Emily described the rules-- nonprofits cannot legally distribute their net revenue to stakeholders; Isaiah cannot receive PMG profit outside of a reasonable salary for services provided. To satisfy this stipulation, Isaiah is formally employed by PMG with, as Emily put it, "a job description and everything." She said wryly that people often think of Isaiah as her boss, but technically, *he* works for *her*—she writes his checks, and he cannot fire her or any PMG staff. These changes reflect a clear shift in priority from an expressive to an instrumental justification of PMG existence—from preserving Isaiah's art as a rewarding goal in itself to providing a public service—and a separation of PMG's external structure and reputation from Isaiah's idiosyncrasies. Although Isaiah's personal details are (literally) embedded in PMG's walls, the organization cannot be equated with Isaiah, and his relationship to the space must be circumscribed.

Despite this conscious distancing, Isaiah remains at the core of PMG—not only officially (he owns the building that houses the Gardens' interior galleries, which the nonprofit rents from him),[15] but also emotionally. As Emily explained, "Isaiah's spirit is incredibly important to everyone here…maintaining his spirit. […] Something I'm really good at is talking to Isaiah like a person, I care about him very much, I'd say he is like a father figure for me." This resonance with Isaiah also corresponds with the professional backgrounds of PMG staff—Emily earned a degree in fine arts and is herself an artist, as is Stacey, the preservation manager, Elspeth, the former general manager, and several Garden Guides. Olivia, the education and outreach manager, is trained in arts education.[16] Explaining how her excitement about her job has grown

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[15] This arrangement, while technically legal, risks giving the appearance of self-dealing. Indeed, while his power in the organization has lessened, Zagar is perennially interested in PMG finances and the organization's contribution to his livelihood.

[16] The coherence of PMG staff members' professional backgrounds and training hearkens to the new institutionalist notion of normative isomorphism—that common professional and educational backgrounds across organizations in the same field leads these organizations to adopt similar formal structures. Indeed, Ellen, PMG's former director, pointed out the lack of staff with this now-common background when she arrived at the organization: "There was no office, people to work would sit at the front […] there was no one with a museum background, or an arts and culture background specifically." It follows, then, that the ways in which PMG has formalized in recent years – in the words

rather than diminished during her multi-year tenure at PMG, Olivia referred to her relationship with Isaiah: "The person I am teaching about is also someone I know personally, and I'm directly involved with [him]." The staff all express affection for one another and for Isaiah,[17] and see their relationships with him as a central part of working at PMG. They express a similarly deep connection with and excitement about the physical space of the Gardens. In marketing manager Allison's words, "everybody really really cares about this place and protecting it and showing it off to the public so that makes for a really positive work experience […] if you're feeling jaded all you have to do is walk outside and walk around the gardens for 5 minutes and then your like this is amazing. I love that I work here." Josie, the visitor services manager, echoed this sentiment: "[the staff] car[e] so much about the place [they] work. It was something that was sought out. Everyone is really invested in [the organization]." The institution of boundaries between Isaiah and the organization, then, has not limited his effect –or the effect of his work--as an expressive driver of the organization.

According to Emily, this personal and emotional connection infuses all staff relationships. "I really truly feel like we are like a family," she told me during an interview. Josie echoed this sentiment: "the staff is like a family in a lot of ways. We're all friends. The difference (from other places) is that for other organizations not everyone is friends. Like you have your friends but you hate your boss. That's not how it is here. Everyone is friends from Emily down. And that's crazy, the unique part of it--you can be like joking around with your boss." On an autumn Friday, two young women staffing the PMG desk giggled about a joke left in the guestbook and an upcoming event. Both had gotten their jobs through personal or professional connections to other PMG employees and had been working there for a short time. "I knew everyone who worked here is awesome," one of them explained. Josie chuckled about a new employee: "She showed her true colors—she's a part of us now." The staff members were connected on multiple levels. Several, including the organization's first two directors, had gotten their jobs at the Gardens through friends, and one staff member had served as the chair of another's thesis committee for her master's degree. Emily elaborated on this during our interview: "[We're] probably more functional than most families are; the negatives are that we're way too close with each other, we're terrible with boundaries, we over-share." She echoed a

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of many staff, becoming more museum-like—is connected to the norms embedded in the educational background shared by both PMG staff and employees of many other American museums.

[17] This sentiment was expressed in interviews and the results of an employee survey.

comment that Olivia had made during an interview, namely, that everyone working at the

Gardens was the same age and belonged to the same peer group, making it hard to discipline

people and maintain an organizational hierarchy.[18] I cut in. "Do you see those as negatives?"

> I've been told that they are negatives. And for a while I really struggled with
> that...that you should be more tight-lipped, and being professional is the most
> important thing […] I kinda just disagree at this point. I feel like being happy and
> loving the place you work at and laughing a lot […] I really value honesty and
> transparency, and I think it's important to have someone that can lead an
> organization and still really be themselves.

The casual, personal character of PMG's organizational culture was a consciously constructed

and instituted aesthetic. Identified with "the collective identities of [the] institutionalized group"

(Thornton and Ocasio 2008: 111), it helped staff make sense of and relate both to their work and

each other, serving as a way of delineating boundaries between PMG staff and outsiders while

simultaneously signaling the continuity between among-colleagues and among-friends

personalities for PMG staff. This dynamic was enabled by the fact that nearly all PMG staff are

of the same generation, and the same gender—only four men (including Isaiah) worked for the

organization during the period of my fieldwork, and the managerial group was entirely women.[19]

Indeed, this uniformity in gender and age was consciously leveraged to support the open

atmosphere described above – Emily told me in an interview that PMG has always had female

executive directors and managers, and that they actively work to combat stereotypes about

women in leadership. To this end, the entire management team recently presented at a conference

entitled "Empowered Women Empowering Women."

The expressive nature of work at the Gardens was also powerful in shaping the

experiences and even the lives of PMG staff. As Emily explained, "your whole life changes

when you get involved in the Magic Gardens. It has happened to everyone on staff. […] [when

you leave] the Gardens start creeping back into your psyche." Other places, according to Emily,

were bureaucratic and not like the Gardens. And the personalized, irreverent nature of Isaiah's

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[18] The relative youth of the staff has other interesting consequences. In a manager's meeting, Emily said that PMG visitors sometimes mistake her for an art student, and a visitor services manager recounted an experience in which a visitor who worked at a startup offered her an internship.
[19] The staff is also predominantly white—only two people of color were working for PMG during my fieldwork. Additionally, a large number of staff members identify as queer; multiple staff, including Emily, articulated in interviews that dynamics of gender and sexuality are important to the organization.

art, the "naked guys on skateboards," as Emily put it, allowed her to "be herself" at work, linking "individual agency [Isaiah's vision and work] and socially constructed institutional practices and rule structures" (Thornton and Ocasio 2008:101). Olivia echoed this sentiment. "People really get a connection to, sort of fall in love with [the Gardens] […] you work here, it sort of gets a hold of you, and you're always interested in it and it pulls you back in." This rhetoric resonates with Leete's (2006) writings on nonprofit labor. Citing a 1978 report, she claims, "nonprofit workers [can] develop a "mystique" about their organizations" connected to the intrinsic, nonmonetary rewards associated with work that employees feel is important (164). Reinforcing the power of this mystique, three staff members returned to PMG after leaving for other positions, and three-quarters of the PMG's full-time staff members, including Emily and Olivia, started as Garden Guides and worked their way up in the organization.

Instead of distracting from the work itself, genuine, creative expression – as an individual and organizational value-- was part and parcel of what it meant to work—and work well—at the Gardens. As Emily shared,

> You have to have a sense of humor [to work here] […] it demands flexibility. You
> have to be incredibly patient. You have to be able to get along with Isaiah, and he
> is a very creative person, he is not organized in the same way, you can't think of
> working with him the way I would work with you on like a daily basis […] We
> have no air conditioning, no heat, there's no doors, no windows, no privacy. You
> just have to go with it; you can't be high maintenance.

Indeed, the expressive *was* instrumental at PMG—emulation of an expressive value system was necessary for success given the PMG's unique structural conditions, such as the lack of climate control. It also served as a sort of heuristic device, a "set of rules, premiums, and sanctions that [staff] create and recreate in such a way that their behavior and accompanying perspective are to some extent regularized and predictable" (Thornton and Ocasio:2008:101). As Emily intimated, "people who are really uptight don't do very well here." Indeed, PMG's exhibition coordinator described how he has worked to become less formal to align with PMG's office culture: "Josie likes to say that I have this air of professionalism when I'm talking to at least buyers and artists […] obviously I'm trying to be a little more relaxed and take ownership, it's okay if things aren't as tightly wound. […] I've definitely gotten a lot more loosey goosy. Because the office, sometimes its a little circus, sometimes it's a kennel (*laughs*) but there is this

good air of collaboration going on, and just the fact that it's okay to let loose, and we're all productive." The ability to participate in the Garden's familiar, free-wheeling organizational culture – as intimately linked to and in many ways derived from the physicality of the space--was a driver of employee commitment to the organization and an implicit requirement for working there.

In their work on de-coupling, Meyer and Rowan (1977) argued that organizations are driven to adopt the particular ideas and structures that have been legitimated by society as "rational myths," despite their potential lack of contribution to productivity (41). In such arrangements organizations' structural elements and activities are loosely coupled or de-coupled; incongruence between rationalized myths and efficiency concerns or between myths from different parts of an organization's environment leads to incongruence between formal structures and actual work (57).[1] While PMG, led by Emily, has worked in recent years to de-link its structure and image from Isaiah's controversial reputation, this does not lead to de-coupling in the organization. While Isaiah the man is separated from control, his personality continues to permeate the organization both internally and externally—the executive director-led imposition of nonprofit structures and divisions in PMG has not forced a disjuncture or caused tension between how PMG looks and what it does, nor has it pushed the organization's expressive façade and organizational culture under the surface. The next section will explore whether we observe similar dynamics in PMG's public space, where expressive and instrumental forces collide in day-to-day interactions between staff and visitors.

**Expressive vs. instrumental in the public space**

Located just inside the door, PMG's large, mosaicked front desk is the first point of contact between staff and visitors to the Gardens. One Sunday Renee and Laura were sitting behind the desk. Both in their twenties and master's students in museum and art-related fields, they sat behind twin computer screens surrounded by mosaicked walls. A rack of pamphlets stood near one of the screens.

The Gardens were busy; someone approached the desk once every 2-3 minutes, the galleries filling with people. Visitors to PMG are mostly white (a 2013 evaluation reported 80%), and range from punky teens to older, scarf-draped women, with a majority (65% according to a recent audience survey) comprising millenials—the 18-to-34-year-olds coveted by museums

nationwide (Cossaboon et al. 2011; Jones et al. 2013; Toepler and Wyszomirski 2012:242-244).[20] As Olivia explained, PMG is "not a traditional museum, so it appeals to people of our generation." She attributed the prevalence of young people at the Gardens to its non-traditional character; it is a "newer" organization, has longer hours and a lower admission fee than do most museums, and also features outsider and visionary art[21] instead of canonical works.[22] On top of this, as Olivia reported, "a lot of people don't see it as a museum. The don't know what it is, or they think it's *that trash place*." On this particular Sunday, both the outdoor and indoor spaces were jammed with such people. Outside, they were backed up in the narrow hallways, which are silent and airy on slower days. Just as the space was crowded with *people*, so too was it full of *cameras*. It was nearly impossible to walk without strolling into the trajectory of someone's lens. Indeed, visitors' primary activity in the Gardens consisted precisely of such personalized activities -- photographing themselves and others in their groups as they posed in the space.

At one point that day, a large group entered, and hovered near the desk. Renee and Sarah, who had replaced Laura at the desk, looked at them, asking, "Do you want to walk through?" Someone replied affirmatively. "It's $7 for adults, $5 for students and seniors. Have you been here before?" Renee rang them up, giving a rehearsed spiel. "This was all made by one man, Isaiah Zagar. It took him 14 years and is the largest site he ever completed. Here is your receipt. Feel free to take pictures, but we ask that you refrain from touching the walls for preservation purposes." Transaction completed, the guests moved on and Renee slouched in her chair. "I had some Doritos today. I forgot how good they were!" Without taking her eyes off her screen, Sarah replied, "I just found out that the spicy Doritos are vegan. Yes! They sell them in my dorm." Laura returned to the desk and clicked through something on the screen. According to a staff survey, Garden Guides like Renee, Laura, and Sarah feel personal commitment to their work at PMG despite less-than-ideal schedules and low pay at eleven dollars per hour, conditions that

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[20] This was a finding in two evaluation reports conducted by University of the Arts students (Cossaboon et al. 2011; Jones et al. 2013). Both reports had minor methodological problems, but many of the findings are still informative.
[21] Outsider or visionary artists are generally defined as artists without formal training (Ardery 1997:330), who regard art history and theory as unimportant or meaningless and express little desire for fame (340). Interestingly, Isaiah Zagar *did* attend art school (Pratt Institute), and, according to PMG staff, draws inspiration from canonical artists such as Rembrandt, Picasso, and Magritte, and regularly mentions a desire for recognition as a "great artist." However, according to a PMG tour guide, PMG considers him a visionary artist because he taught himself the mosaic technique.
[22] This term refers to art employed in the nineteenth-century establishment of exclusionary arts institutions, many of which persist as the traditional museums of today According to DiMaggio (1987), traditional art museums involved "the establishment of fine art as a category separate from the trivial or mundane—both the rejection of the market and the creation of ritual distance between artist and consumer" (205).

necessitate the coordination of multiple jobs. Casual banter continued until the next visitor approached.

Two at a time at the desk, Renee, Laura, and Sarah repeated their spiel countless times to couples, groups of friends, and families as the afternoon progressed. Each group received a slightly different variant accompanied with compliments, such as "I like your gloves," or suggestions, such as, "you should tag us on Instagram." They continued casual conversation with each other, pausing mid-sentence whenever a visitor approached. "If you say something about someone's…Bye!" Sarah halted a gripe about "art crits" to cheerily bid farewell to a couple as they exited.

Around 2:45pm, a group (two women, a man, and two children) approached the desk. As they paid, Renee offered the kids scavenger hunt activities. One of the women quickly replied no, they were there to take pictures. Laura broke in: "you guys aren't doing like a photo shoot, are you?" "No." "Ok, because we charge for those."  According to Olivia, this rule was created due to space constraints. PMG is fairly small, and large photo shoots disrupt other visitors' experience of the space. The group moved on, and Renee and Laura started talking quietly, clearly frustrated. A few moments later Sarah appeared. "They're on the cusp [of a photo shoot]." She told Renee and Laura that they had the kids take their jackets off for the photos despite the cold weather, but they had a small camera, not a big lens or tripod. "They were really mean to the kids," Renee told Sarah, because they had not let them do the scavenger hunt. After a pause Laura concluded, "I don't feel like dealing with it." Still grumbling about the visitors, they dropped the subject and returned to shuffling papers. Sorting through a stack of stuff, Renee picked up a piece of cardstock, a comment card. "No one has ever filled one out; it's the first one."

While Renee and Laura's casual demeanor and personal conversation reflected the expressive internal culture described earlier, such critique of visitors' behavior was frowned upon by professional staff.  During a manager's meeting one Monday, Josie described an email she had sent to the staff regarding unprofessional behavior by Garden Guides. "Nothing happened, it's just important to only talk about visitors in secure, staff-only settings." Garden Guides, she said, sometimes complain about visitors while they are still in the building. Emily was frustrated. "That's not cool. […] Don't talk shit. It's against everything we are all about,

[and] that negativity, I don't want that in the space."[23] While free, genuine expression by staff is a core component of working well at the PMG, not all expression is welcome in its public spaces, only that which does not contradict organizational norms and thus avoids marring the organization's reputation as a deliverer of services. These norms are articulated in the PMG's employee handbook[24], which lists "negative attitude towards staff/visitors" and "inappropriate language in front of visitors" (along with other prohibited behavior) as grounds for disciplinary action. Additionally, while visitors' photographing themselves and their loved ones is a primary activity in the space (and one that is advantageous to PMG's survival), it too is only appropriate when it does not interfere with the delivery of the PMG experience to other visitors, which might disrupt PMG's reputation.

This division is an emblematic one, detailed in Erving Goffman's discussion of "regions" in his classic work, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. Goffman's "front region" refers to the public sphere, the location in which role performances take place. When operating in this front region, actors' performances aim to embody "certain standards" of comportment when conversing with members of the audience or in "visual or aural range of the audience" (1959:107). In Goffman's words, during such performances "some aspects of the activity are expressively accentuated and other aspects, which might discredit the fostered impression, are suppressed" (111). These suppressed elements are subsequently expressed behind the scenes in the "back region," where the front stage persona is deliberately contradicted. According to Goffman "here the performer can relax; he can drop his front, forgo speaking his lines, and step out of character" (112). The regulation of Garden Guide behavior in PMG public space is entirely intelligible through this lens. PMG's internal culture, in which a premium is placed on expression, by staff, of personal thoughts, convictions, and ideas is to a certain extent suppressed in "front region" performance, where the organization's professionalism is on display. This preserves the integrity of the latter while allowing the former to mitigate tensions related to the demands of public-facing work. It is notable that this regulation is primarily exerted upon hourly front of house staff--as one Garden Guide told me, over recent years PMG has become somewhat

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[23] This discussion references incidents other than those described above. While it was necessary for Renee and Laura to assess visitor intentions in order to ascertain whether their behavior constituted a photo shoot, their statements that the adults in the group were not nice to the children, as well as their grumbling later on (which included statements about the "type of people" the visitors were) would have been considered inappropriate by Emily and the other managers.

[24] This document was created in 2014 after Emily returned to PMG as director, though an informal list of procedures existed as early as 2011.

more hierarchical – that is, the division between managerial and front of house staff has grown. In this Garden Guide's words, "there's two branches – there's the upstairs staff and the downstairs staff, and there isn't as much communication between the two [as there used to be]. And I feel like its definitely known by both parties, like if you look at the job description for the assistant manager, being the liaison between the two. It's less about helping your employees gain new skills, its more this is your job this is what you do […] there isn't much growth anymore, especially for Garden Guides." Indeed, at a 2015 managers' retreat PMG managers explicitly mentioned the imposition of a formal staff hierarchy and division of specialized and non-specialized staff. Some staff articulated these and other changes to PMG's visitor experience as particularly important in defining PMG as a professional arts organization that should be taken seriously. As preservation manager Stacey put it, "one of the basic clique-y things people say – is this a trash museum? People come in and they don't want to pay, say "I thought you were a nonprofit," so they don't think they need to pay for it […] if you're taking your visitor experience more seriously, your visitors may take you more seriously." A Garden Guide similarly attributed the imposition of staff hierarchies to the need to defend the organization's reputation: "it's a lot about having to be more structured, I guess there's now this fear of not messing up. […] we have a name now and we don't want to ruin this name."

The process of organizational formalization at PMG, then, does not leave the organization's free expression-oriented value system untouched. Instead, in order to manage the organization's reputation, limitations are placed on what types of expression are appropriate in the presence of PMG customers – regulations that disproportionately apply to non-specialized hourly staff and that occur simultaneously as the imposition of a clearer staff hierarchy in the organization. Interestingly, however, these limitations on behavior manifest not as calls for increased professionalism or self-control. Instead, they appear as expectations regarding the emotional valence of non-specialized employee expression –keeping negativity out of the space. Formalization, then, *adjusts* rather than challenges the values underlying PMG operation, more explicitly linking them to positive valenced interactions between the staff, visitors, and the space, especially for those employees occupying low-status positions.

**Organizational formalization at PMG**

"We need to wait and see how Isaiah is responding." Emily tempered expectations about an impending office move during a 2015 calendar meeting. Located two blocks from the Gardens on South Street, the office was hated by everyone. Despite its cheerful blue walls, one manager called it "the morgue." Emily was seated in her usual spot at the head of two pushed-together tables. Arranged around her were five of PMG's six managers,[25] with me off to the side. All six were women in their late 20s and early 30s. Emily's dog Skunky wandered in and out.

"How do you want to start this?" Emily started off casually, mouth half-full of pastries brought for preservation manager Stacey's birthday. "Does anyone have anything planned for January?" Emily spoke most at this and other meetings, but other managers teased her and pushed back, reinforcing a peer relationship. Each manager independently controls scheduling in her area. Olivia rattled off events, and Allison, in charge of rentals, listed some wedding dates.

The garden was scheduled to close for a few days in early 2015 for preservation work. The PMG board, Emily noted, had already been notified. "They made admissions estimates conservative to account for a potential closure." The board consists of corporate reps, mid-level employees from Comcast and AstraZeneca Pharmaceuticals, for example, along with members of Philadelphia tourist organizations and Isaiah's wife Julia. Isaiah is an honorary member; he does not have voting rights on organizational matters, but cannot be removed. In that it has a board, a director and salaried staff, as well as hourly staff and volunteers, PMG follows a typical nonprofit structure (DiMaggio 1991:45). This choice of organizational form can be viewed as a clear case of structural isomorphism with the broader museum field, as nine out of ten museums and galleries are nonprofits (Toepler and Wyszomerski 2012:231).[26] Despite its adoption of nonprofit nomenclature, however, bureaucratized internal structures associated with nonprofits[27] were not established concurrently with PMG's adoption of a 501(c)(3) status in 2004.[28]

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[25] The PMG has an interestingly horizontal organizational structure, with an executive director, four salaried managers, two hourly managers, and the rest of the staff made up of part-time hourly workers and volunteers.

[26] Ironically, this is due to the fact that the American Alliance of Museums defines museums as nonprofits—according to their criteria, for-profit museums are *not* museums.

[27] DiMaggio (2006) uses the example of the "encyclopedic art museum" to describe such structures: "a confederation of professional departments, each with its own distinctive objective function" (447).

[28] An IRS classification granting tax-exempt status to organizations that conduct not-for-profit, non-political activity. In order to qualify as a public charity and become a 501(c)(3) an organization must satisfy a number of conditions, complete a lengthy form, and file it with the IRS, which approves applications.

However, this lack of formalized structures has not remained intact – PMG has recently been undergoing concerted formalization. As Emily told me, "[the calendar meeting] was the first of its kind." After working as general manager, she came back as the director less than two years ago, and attributes at least some of the organizational changes to her leadership style and desire to distribute ownership to others in the organization. JB, PMG's former board chair, agreed with this assessment, also crediting the former director, Ellen, with accomplishing several early strategic initiatives and initiating others. In this way, these directors' roles align with that of the "institutional entrepreneur […] importing and exporting cultural symbols and practices from one institutional order [that of the nonprofit museum field] to another [that of the personalized PMG]" (Thornton and Ocasio 2008:115). The PMG staff has far more meetings now, including weekly manager meetings.  The organization's bylaws and employee handbook have been revised in the last year, an employee survey has been conducted and new staff structure rolled out, two new bathrooms, a security system, and an ADA-accessible ramp have been installed, and a timed and online-purchase ticketing system has been implemented. It is also undertaking a time-tracking process to ascertain the distribution of time spent by staff on various tasks, videotaping tours for professional development purposes, and implementing a strategic plan and stringent disciplinary code.[29] Former board chair JB summed up the changes:

> We've gone from being this loose-knit nonprofit to one where we have strategic plans, we have everything documented, we have everything on paper for people to look at. We've also matured as being more preservation-minded, taking care of all of our L&I[30] licensing, making sure everything is legit with the city, making sure that all of the documentation is done, just really getting all of our Ts crossed and Is dotted. We've got the paperwork, we've got the policies, people have clear expectations, we have job descriptions, people know what they're doing, we have, you know, a good benefits package in place, all the insurance in place and everyone is aware of it, we're moving more toward having documentation on Dropbox so board members can be able to …if they have a curiosity they can go in and look at something. Altru[31] was a huge step for us. To be able to have that software in place and to be able to use that to power the website, to power events, to track people, to understand like once we have our members in there to remind them to renew, to understand what our membership is and how our membership actually behaves, I think its just really mature.

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[29] This shift resonates with E.P. Thompson's account of the replacement of task orientation with clock time in 19th century labor contexts, marking the imposition of discipline and time-thrift on labor, in which "time [was] now currency; it [was] not passed but spent" (1967:61).

[30] Philadelphia Licensing and Inspections

[31] An electronic customer management platform, put in place in 2016.

 The entrance of professional nonprofit structures and processes at PMG has introduced new

"systems of classifications" (Thornton and Ocasio 2008:101) in which work processes – often

fundamentally expressive and values-oriented in nature – are organized and measured in

accordance to standards of efficiency. Staff also attest to the scope of recent changes at PMG. As

Stacey explained, "Emily became the director a year ago, since then we have made all these

improvements to the space, it's really enhancing the visitor experience." Olivia put it simply:

"things have changed a lot in a few years."

As discussed earlier and detailed in a 2011 strategic plan, central to PMG's "maturation"

is clarifying the organization's relationship with Isaiah. Again, DiMaggio's 1987 writings on

nonprofit organizations help us understand this move:

> Indeed, changes of goals over the lifecycle of an organization occur most
> frequently in cultural nonprofits founded by an artist/entrepreneur […]
> Frequently, as the organization grows, the board expands to include community
> influentials who eventually dismiss the founder or force her or him to cede
> responsibility to a full-time manager, who serves as an agent of the board (211).

Emily and the PMG board also make major decisions about organizational functioning.

However, as detailed earlier, PMG does not aim to dismiss Isaiah entirely in the course of

formalization. On the contrary, maintaining his legacy is central to the organization. Indeed, such

dismissal would also be impossible–Isaiah retains considerable power as the Gardens' founder

and landlord,[32] necessitating his consultation regarding many organizational decisions.

I argue that the process of negotiating these relationships—between Isaiah and PMG,

among staff members, and between staff and visitors—allows us to observe the development of a

hybrid system of guidelines and norms at PMG. Similar to the synthesis described by Chen and

O'Mahony (2006) and Chen (2009), this system *integrates* a local practice of values-oriented

personal expression with instrumental service delivery-oriented procedures of professionalized

nonprofit organizations, rather than resulting in tension between the two.[33]

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[32] He doesn't, however, own the Gardens themselves, which were donated to the nonprofit.

[33] This opportunity resonates with Gouldner's classic analysis of the process of bureaucratization in a gypsum mining organization. Building on Weber's writings on bureaucracy, Gouldner describes the emergence of three co-present types of bureaucracy in the organization—mock bureaucracy, operating in name only, which we could characterize as de-coupled; representative bureaucracy, mutually respected and implemented by managers and workers; and punishment-centered bureaucracy, or the displacement of the old system with a bureaucratic one, in which processes were enforced by one group upon the other (1954:217). Each type of bureaucracy was associated with different levels of conflict in its implementation, and the emergence of one type or another was influenced by

**Fostering instrumental expressiveness in the transitional nonprofit**

When the group turned to scheduling for the month of May later in the calendar meeting, Olivia mentioned that she was planning a vacation to Barcelona and Morocco for that time. Swiftly departing from calendaring, the other managers poked fun at Olivia, bantering about being jealous and how great Barcelona is. Emily immediately recalled a wild weekend she once had in the city. Personal anecdotes blended seamlessly with scheduling discussions. As the group marched through the 2015 calendar, discussion also covered the general manager's wedding and guest list, Emily's love life and relationship history, and raising chickens, among other things. Ribbing flowed in both directions. Allison frequently exclaimed, "I'm going to kill myself" as Emily proposed yet another event. Rather than representing intra-team tensions, this anecdote shows how PMG staff members both enacted and tested the integration of the expressive and the instrumental via social interaction. Emily used personal anecdotes to help others make sense of the situation surrounding the office move, and other staff used dramatic expressions to push back and advocate for themselves in scheduling decisions. Staff deployed shared emotive behavior and language to limit the degree to which formal organizational structures shaped their work, and all meeting participants reinforced the relaxed, personalized PMG culture through slouched posture and unfettered commentary in a formal meeting setting.[34]

Throughout, Isaiah remained the wild card. The women depended on him for permission to move offices and execute logistical needs. They were also his keepers, responsible for structuring his movements, such as planning an "open for all" birthday party for him during which they "could just have Isaiah hanging out in the back." As Olivia explained in an interview, "[there is a] balance between making Isaiah happy and doing what is best for the organization." He is consulted about PMG programming but does not have a say in its conceptualization. As Emily put it in an interview, "a lot of [his ideas] are not feasible for the organization." He used to have power to remove PMG board members at will; now, Emily says, he does not get a vote, but

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the degree to which imposed processes resonated with workers' personal values (194). Helpfully, Gouldner also notes organizational culture's influence on emerging bureaucracy; "how the new order will fare, how effective it will be, or how people will respond to it depends, in part, on the character of the old order which it has replaced" (69). Though PMG's formalization style is not encapsulated by Gouldner's triad of bureaucracies, his findings on the influence of workers' values and prevailing organizational culture on the form of emerging bureaucracy is instructive in understanding the integrated nature of the PMG's emerging vocabulary.

[34] An example can be found in the way Allison pushed back on Emily's proposal of additions to their event calendar (and thus Allison's workload) through the use of dramatic language. It is important to note that this integration is most pronounced at the managerial level of the organization; as previously described, formalization has led to increased divisions between the managerial and front-of-house staff groups.

still always has a say. However, he retains some power in the organization - his permission is required for any preservation work, and his ideological and artistic centrality to the organization (as well as his position as landlord) means that "making Isaiah happy" is an unavoidable concern for Emily and the other PMG staff.[35] And staff must also manage Isaiah's sometimes unpredictable behavior, which can create public relations challenges for the organization.

As we have seen, PMG's recent progression toward formalization has not resulted in significant tension between instrumental and expressive forces in the organization. Instead, it reflects the concerted *integration* of expressive and instrumental logics. The revision of PMG's mission in 2011 marked a public reorientation of the organization toward instrumental service delivery over preservation of Isaiah's expressive masterpiece-as-such, and PMG's fluid organizational structure is in the process of hardening through defined roles and expectations around public behavior, regular meetings, an electronic management system and a strategic plan, among many other initiatives. However, interpersonal staff relationships retain a casual, personal character grounded in staff members' free expression of values and convictions and their genuine connection to the physical space, and formal structures are flexed to incorporate the continued involvement of Isaiah as central to the spirit and functioning of the organization. Indeed, Isaiah's intimate expression constitutes the Gardens, where participating in an emotive culture and an identification with Isaiah's art are criteria for making sense of work and major drivers of staff engagement. But while Isaiah-as-artist retains control over changes to his artwork, Isaiah-as-administrator is carefully circumscribed. The regulation of Isaiah's spheres of influence and of front-of-house staff and visitor behavior ensure that an idea PMG as inherently expressive (as both a place to work and to visit) can coexist harmoniously with the cultivation of a positive, professional nonprofit identity for a formalized PMG.

The integration of instrumental and expressive forces at PMG can be understood as manifested through structural, normative, and symbolic dimensions (Thornton and Ocasio 2008:101). Structurally, the lack of building infrastructure and irreverent, diary-like character of Isaiah's artwork necessitate flexibility on the part of employees and the centrality of personal details in the space. These forces are circumscribed by an emergent professional organizational structure and associated artifacts—like new exit signs recently placed in mosaicked doorways--

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[35] Additionally, all of PMG's assets are made up of Isaiah's artwork, a situation that would also seem to necessitate his continued involvement in the organization.

and distributed ownership of the space between Isaiah and PMG,[36] while also enabling its popularity with young people and (arguably) its success at an uncertain moment for many museums in the United States. Normatively, public expectations and legal requirements of nonprofits as independent, professional entities necessitate the establishment of boundaries between Isaiah and the PMG organization, limiting his power to shape the organization, while casual, emotive behavior and identification with Isaiah's artwork remain implicit requirements of membership in PMG staff. Symbolically, personal expression facilitates staff members' deep connection to and identification with the space and organization, and provides a vocabulary through which to understand and negotiate professionalized structures and processes. Correspondingly, the nonprofit form allows PMG to affiliate itself with the production of public goods (Hansmann 1987:28) and to distance the organization from Isaiah's reputation by erecting a scaffold of official supervisory relationships and statements of organizational purpose above and around him.

The case of PMG, then, complicates Frumkin's assertion that nonprofit professionalization may cause tension with "some of the individual values and commitments that are so critical" (2009:100). The organization stands in contrast to both this prognosis and the assumption that professional management is necessary for nonprofit organizational competitiveness. Indeed, Emily believes that PMG's nontraditional features[37] contribute to the organization's growth spurt--it has exceeded its visitorship goals[38] just as museums nationwide are experiencing reduced attendance and aging audiences (Toepler and Wyszomirski 2012:244). As she put it:

> Everyone wants to attract millenials, they don't know how to do it. We don't have a problem with that. Everyone wants to be different and edgy. We don't have a problem with that. Nobody wants to be in a stuffy place. We don't have a problem with that. […] millenials shy away from very corporate [things], they like this whole "salt of the earth" personality, it's like we don't even have to *try*. We're just lucky in that way, and we use it to our advantage. We recognize our strengths.

Most PMG staff attribute the increase in visitor numbers to the organization's traction on social media. Emily similarly reported in an interview that the fact that "everyone [is] getting

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[36] Ownership is distributed in that the nonprofit owns the Gardens portion of PMG, while Isaiah owns the adjacent mosaicked building that serves as PMG's gallery space.

[37] Such features include PMG's longer open hours, organizational youth, focus on outsider art, and expressive culture.

[38] Annual visitorship has grown tremendously in the past years, increasing from about 40,000 to over 100,000.

their Facebook profile photo taken here" did not hurt the PMG's bottom line; the organization's orientation toward staff and visitors' personal expression and connection to the Gardens appear to support, rather than impede, their survival.[39] Interestingly, however, this same success—the increase in visitors and corresponding 400% growth in PMG's budget since it opened to the public—has, according to staff, driven some of the formalization the organization has experienced. As Ellen, the former director put it,

> What is magical about PMG is that it is handmade and artist-made and a very hand-hewn creative space. I didn't want to overshadow that with too many rules and procedures, but the reality is the more people come you are responsible for them, you're responsible for their experience in the space, you're responsible for their safety, so with all of that comes more and more rules and more procedures about how to do things, to make sure the visitor experience is as good as it can be and everyone is safe and happy.

Formalization at PMG is thus intertwined with growing visitor numbers. New structures respond to strain on systems produced by growing crowds and lines, while more systematic attention to public relations and marketing via a clearer organizational structure allows PMG to maximize their status as a profile-picture magnet. Within the organization, Emily and Ellen before her have initiated and guided responses to growing visitorship and have been the major drivers of other organizational changes. As the exhibition coordinator put it, "I feel like Emily came in like a tornado – she was like bursting for change. Emily has done a lot of internal…laying those foundations internally, in terms of the staff and the general overall function and preservation of the space. Not to say Ellen…she was very interested in preservation and did a lot in terms of infrastructure, but she was also focused on programing, and getting more people into the space." Other staff members have also contributed—as Stacey put it, at the Gardens "it's not hard to make a suggestion and see that suggestion come to fruition." Notably absent has been pressure from PMG's board and funders—unlike most other arts nonprofits, the vast majority of PMG's budget flows from ticket sales, and the organization has no dedicated development staff and very few funders.[40] Indeed, the two PMG board chairs I interviewed

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[39] As evidenced by Emily's quote above, these elements allow PMG to organically align with forces of change in the museum sector toward a new definition of arts experiences that focuses on creating personalized, unique, unpretentious and participatory experiences that natively incorporate digital technology (Sidford, Frasz, and Hinand 2014:4-7).

[40] Ellen (the former director) mentioned that receiving grants from the Fels Fund and National Endowment for the Arts during her tenure were major legitimators for PMG, but she clarified that these grant-makers didn't push the

attributed PMG's formalization to Emily and Ellen's initiative. And as we have seen, then, while many of the structures and processes adopted by PMG are touted as best practices in the nonprofit management publications, these practices do not exist in tension with the expressive drivers of PMG work. Instead, this paper has shown the process by which standardized and expressive practices are integrated into a set of guidelines in which both logics collectively influence organizational action.[41]
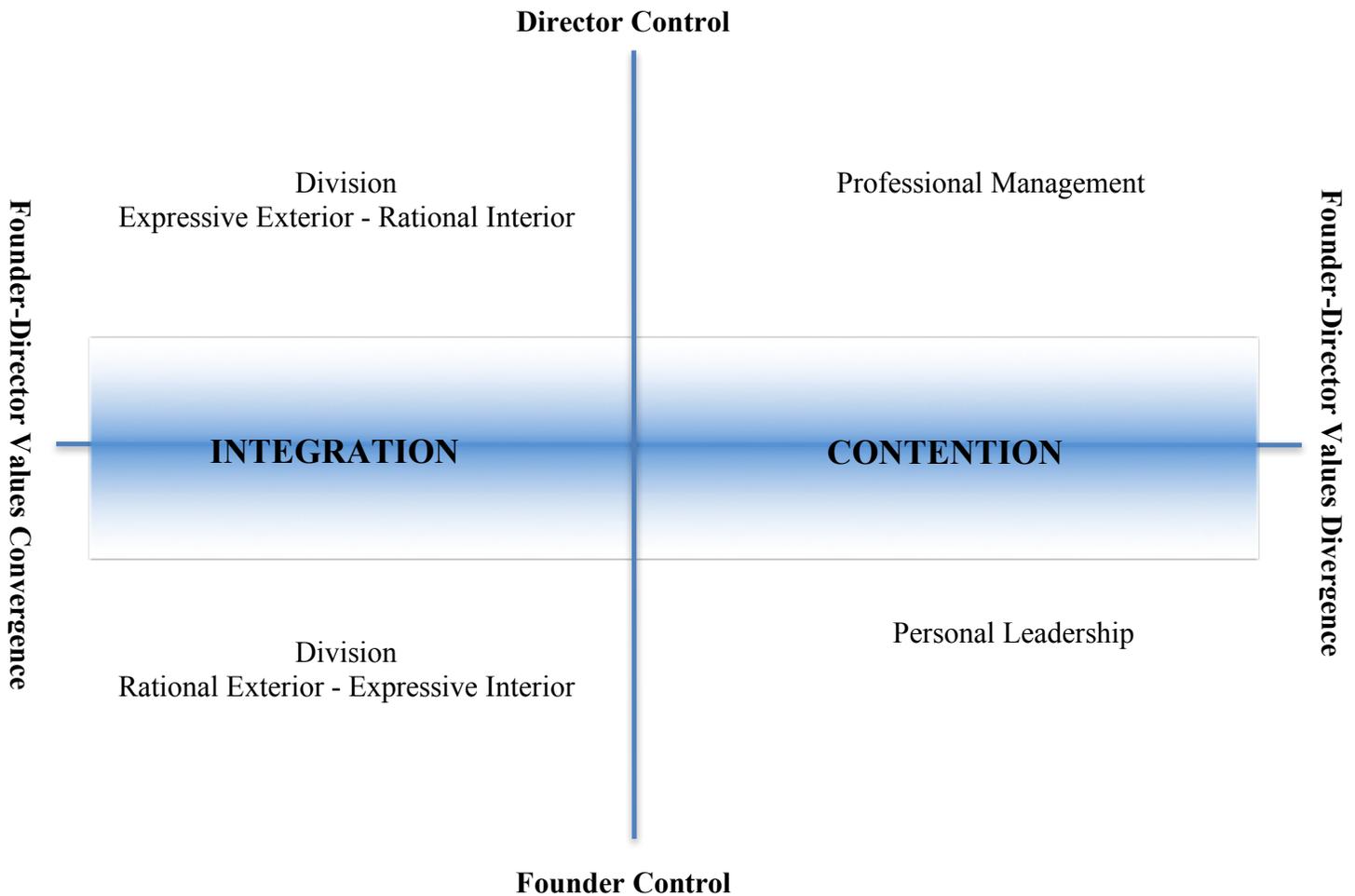
Importantly, the integration experienced by PMG is not entirely unique to the organization. Organizational cultures characterized by close, often personal relationships between staff are common in nonprofit organizations (for examples, see Golden-Biddle and Rao 1997; Jenness 1990), and the abiding influence of Isaiah and internal focus on expression resonate with literature about founder influence in family-owned businesses. As Denison, Lief, and Ward (2004) explain, family firms' "link with strong beliefs and core values is real and alive. The role of the founder is crucial to establishing an organization's identity, core beliefs, and purpose […] acting as trustees of the founder's values, while remaining true to one's personal beliefs, poses both an enormous challenge and an opportunity for [staff members]" (64). Such a description aligns closely with PMG staff members' statements that Isaiah's spirit is central to the organization, and of the need to balance his desires with organizational needs. This correspondence extends more generally to literature on charismatic leaders in organizations (e.g. Newman and Wallender 1978). While these associations – with other nonprofits and arts organizations and family businesses – are disparate, they raise questions regarding the primacy of certain organizational characteristics[1] in producing PMG's unique form of professionalism, and where else we might observe such integrated systems.

The PMG case thus provides an opportunity to reconsider Frumkin's call for management strategies that capitalize on both the instrumental and expressive forces in nonprofits. I would argue that two drivers of expressive-instrumental integration in nonprofits in periods of transition can be potentially abstracted from the PMG case. The first is the degree to which power is shared

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organization in a certain direction—rather she explained the grants allowed PMG to do things they wanted to do but were previously unable to afford.

[41] It is important to qualify the rather rosy portrait I have painted of PMG operations and its success in attracting visitors. While staff acknowledge the organization's positive situation and outlook, they maintain that the current visitor boom could end at any time, which could drastically affect the organization's bottom line. Additionally, staff also discuss the threat of manager turnover—the departure of key personnel could also easily disrupt the portrait I paint in this paper. Additionally, relations between Isaiah and PMG are dynamic and in a constant state of reproduction and renegotiation, opening up ongoing possibilities for increased tension.

between the founder (abstracted as an expressive force) and the executive director (defined as an organizational CEO who did NOT found the organization, and abstracted as an instrumental and professional force).[42] The second is the degree to which the executive director's values and interests converge with those of the founder. At PMG, a situation in which Isaiah controlled the organization has evolved into relatively equal power-sharing between Isaiah and Emily, in which both have substantial but carefully delineated spheres of influence over the organization. This is accompanied by strong values convergence – as Emily put it, "Isaiah's spirit is incredibly important to everyone here […] I care about him very much, I'd say he is like a father figure for me." The combined influence of these two factors can be theorized in the following diagram:



**Director Control**

Division
Expressive Exterior - Rational Interior

Professional Management

**Founder-Director Values Convergence**

**INTEGRATION**

**CONTENTION**

**Founder-Director Values Divergence**

Division
Rational Exterior - Expressive Interior

Personal Leadership

**Founder Control**

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[42] The opposition of founder as expressive and executive director as professional is surely oversimplified; however, this caricature is instructive in illustrating the dynamics at play in nonprofit organizations in transition. It also corresponds with theories of how rationalization happens in nonprofit organizations, in which managers with relevant expertise (from the private sector or otherwise) are brought in as change agents or institutional entrepreneurs (Thornton and Ocasio 2008:115) to accelerate rationalization.

Director-controlled organizations characterized by a divergence in founder-director values will exhibit director-installed professional management, in which the founder's expressive impulses are overwhelmed by a strong, professional director's drive toward organizational instrumentalism. If this were to have occurred at PMG, we would expect Isaiah's influence—and the influence of his spirit on the organization-- to be significantly curtailed.  This outcome corresponds with Frumkin (2009)'s argument that professionalizing forces diminish the expressive functions of nonprofits. Correspondingly, founder-controlled organizations with similarly divergent values will exhibit the idiosyncratic leadership of a strong expressive founder and a distinct lack of professionalization. If this were the case at PMG we would expect to see Isaiah retaining full control of the organization, with a corresponding absence of formalized structures and processes.  A founder-controlled organization with strongly shared values between founder and director will exhibit a division – the internal character of the organization will remain expressive and aligned with the strong founder, while the organization will exhibit external professionalism and instrumentalism (in which the presence of an executive director is a part) to garner necessary legitimacy. This situation perhaps characterizes PMG in its early years as a nonprofit, prior to recent drives toward professionalization. Correspondingly, a director-controlled organization with strong values convergence will exhibit a reverse division – an internally rationalized organization with external efforts toward expressiveness to demonstrate continued alignment with the founder's vision.[43] This story becomes more interesting, I would argue, and more applicable to the current case, when power is shared between the founder and executive director—as it is in the case of PMG. When an organization is characterized by power sharing and values divergence, we would expect contention between expressive and instrumental organizational functions – two power players with divergent ideas of the organization's value will engage in struggle over the organization's direction. When values converge, however—as they do in the PMG case—I would argue that the organization will exhibit integration of instrumental and expressive functions. As we see at PMG, in this case the shared values between executive director and founder—derived from shared artistic background, personality

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[43] These outcomes assume that the founder and director exhibit values convergence around an expressive vision of the organization.

compatibility and identification with Isaiah's artwork—motivate efforts to reconcile the two organizational forces into a coherent, mutually-constitutive logic.

I would further argue that this matrix is moderated by three additional influences. The first is the relationship between the organization's board of directors and the founder – and the board's perspective on whether the founder has a positive or negative influence on the organization. In the PMG case, board influence is largely balanced, recognizing Isaiah's centrality to the organization but supportive of director-led reforms, while declining to exert strong influence on the organization. The second influence concerns whether there exists a third party – the founder's spouse, for example--who mediates their relationship to the board and organizational managers. Indeed, Julia, Isaiah's wife, was an important facilitator of power-sharing between Isaiah and Emily, soothing egos and mediating communication. The third influence is the degree to which the organization is characterized by strong founder-motivated imprinting. The concept of imprinting is attributed to Stinchcombe (1965)'s seminal essay, "Social Structure and Organizations," and has been substantially developed in more recent work (for example Marquis and Tilcsik 2013; Johnson 2008; Baron and Hannan 2002). Imprinting typically signifies the degree to which organizations internalize, at distinct moments of susceptibility, institutions or economic and technological conditions such that these characteristics persist through the organization's life. Such imprinting often takes place through founder influence or importation of certain ideas or conditions. Following these ideas, PMG's strongly expressive physical setting—and the frequent reference of Isaiah as the animating spirit of the organization--could be considered a case of concretized imprinting of Isaiah Zagar's predilections on the organization. Indeed, this could be considered an extreme case of imprinting, as PMG would not exist without the Gardens. As we see in the PMG example, such imprinting can have a major influence on organizational functioning – the Gardens' lack of infrastructure and the character of Isaiah's art as "naked guys on skateboards," Emily's way of characterizing the irreverent nature of Isaiah's artwork, limits the degree to which PMG can be formalized. Extrapolating from this example, I would argue that strong imprinting serves to reinforce founder power in transitional organizations, effectively limiting the degree to which a rationalizing director can exert control over the organization.

In thinking through the applicability of these insights to other organizations, it is of course important to consider the degree to which PMG's case, and indeed Frumkin's theory

itself, may be particular to certain types of organizations. Indeed, the distinction Frumkin notes between values-oriented and service-delivery justifications of nonprofit action seem particularly pronounced for organizations working in the arts and culture, and more difficult to discern in, for example, social service or health-oriented nonprofits. The status of PMG's physical space as a piece of installation art is also certainly important in the case, particularly in its power to generate imprinting and to serve as a focal point for organizational values. It's possible that organizations lacking such a concrete instantiation of organizational values (some performing arts organizations, for example) would experience different outcomes. Nevertheless, applying Frumkin's framework to the PMG case is helpful in surfacing a variety of potentially meaningful variables in emerging nonprofits' transitions from founder to executive director control.

**Conclusion**

This paper has applied ethnographic methods to a nonprofit organization undergoing a leadership transition, Philadelphia's Magic Gardens, to illuminate how the relationship between instrumental and expressive forces is worked out via on-the-ground processes of organizational formalization, and how leadership transition facilitates organizational formalization and shapes how it occurs. As we have seen, values-oriented expression is implicated on multiple levels at PMG. It is integral to the structures of staff interactions and relationships, as well as relationships between staff and the public, between staff and their work, and between visitors and the space. It also constitutes the space itself—Isaiah Zagar's personal details and life experiences are, quite literally, embedded in the walls. As the organization undergoes formalization, however, this local practice is shifted and negotiated. The adoption of nonprofit structures and processes resulted in some degree of separation of the organization's reputation and that of Isaiah's, and a distinction between front-of-house and back-of-house behavior. However, shared power between Isaiah and Emily, combined with strong values coherence between these two leaders and the abiding influence of a physical environment saturated with personal expression facilitates the integration of an expressive orientation with another organizational identity for the PMG—that of a formalized nonprofit organization characterized by field-wide norms of professionalism, respectability, and instrumentality. The resulting hybrid system of guidelines at PMG allows us to theorize the conditions under which the integration of two forces in nonprofits– as venues for staff members' personal expression and as rational instruments of service delivery – may occur in transitioning organizations.

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