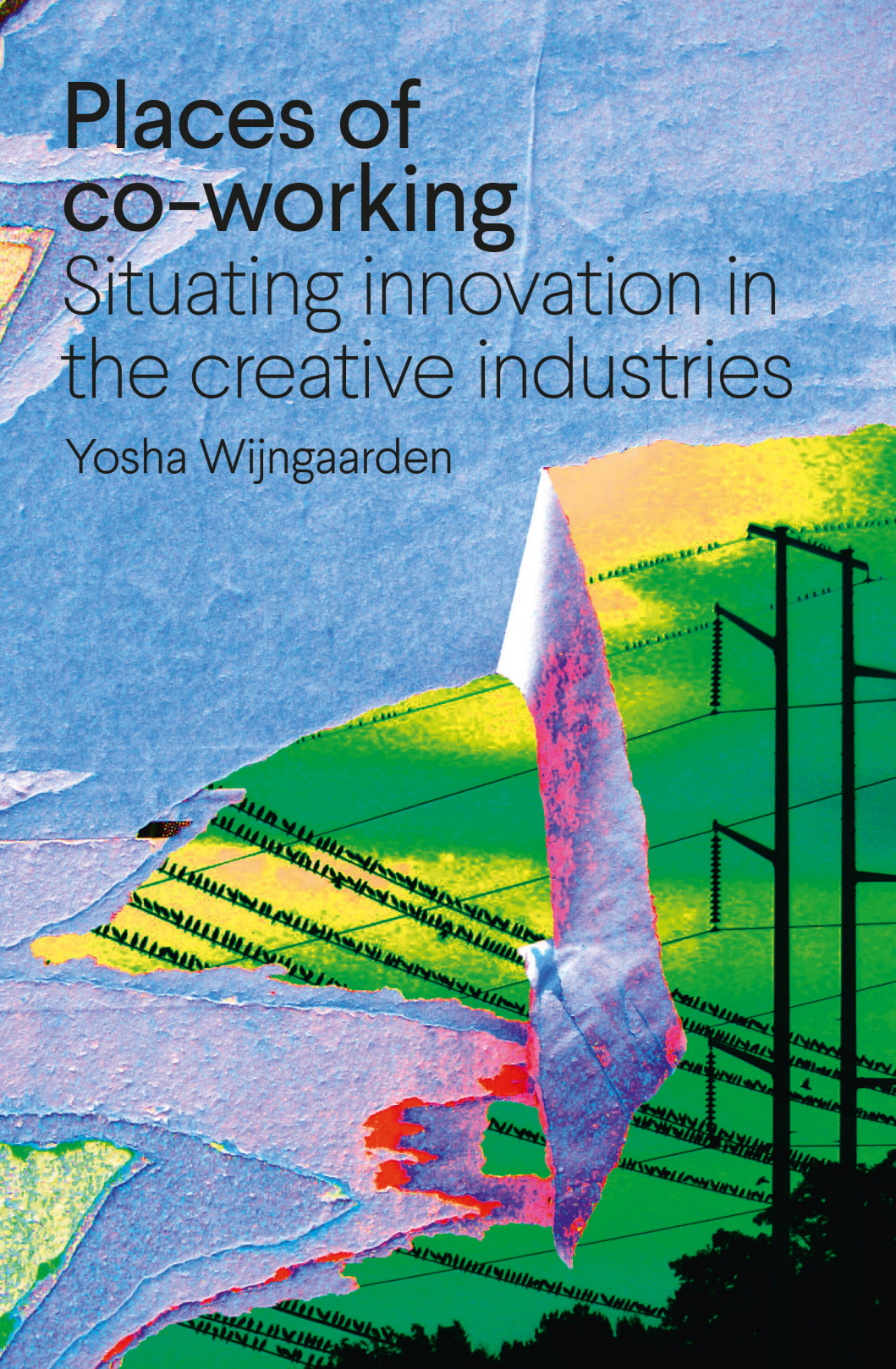


Places of co-working

Situating innovation in
the creative industries

Yosha Wijngaarden



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Places of co-working
Situating innovation in the creative industries

Plaatsen van samen-werken
Innovatie situeren in de creatieve industrieën

Thesis

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For Eli

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Chapter 1

“Birds of a feather...”

Introduction

INTRODUCTION

Creative cities, creative class, creative industries

“Societies the world over are facing enormous challenges today. The economic crisis has left its mark on them. Their populations are ageing; and the fossil fuels on which they run are becoming scarcer. Population growth has put pressure on the quality of life, infrastructure and environmental quality of cities worldwide. But there is good news too. The Netherlands is actively helping to face these global challenges. Innovativeness and creativity – both crucial factors in our response to the issues facing society – are innate to the Dutch. [...] Creativity and innovation are superbly combined in the creative industries” (Erp, Slot, Rutten, Zuurmond, & Németh, 2014).

This quote from the former Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science and Minister of Economic Affairs in the report *Designing a Country*¹ leaves little to the imagination. The Netherlands is thought to possess the power to resolve global challenges by means of the innovative creative industries. Indeed, the creative and cultural industries are booming, and not only for their presumed societal impact. Newspapers and policy reports on regional, national and international level all aim to tap into the wealth the cultural and creative sectors ought to bring. While the Western economies since the early 2000s have witnessed periods of steep decline, most cultural and creative economy related figures demonstrated continuing growth (see e.g. the Creative Economy Reports of UNCTAD – the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development). As such, these industries are incorporating an increased segment of the overall economy (Bontje, Musterd, Kovács, & Murie, 2011; Fleischmann, Daniel, & Welters, 2017; Koops & Rutten, 2017) and are employing an ever growing number of individuals (Koops & Rutten, 2017).

¹ Issued by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science.

This peak in interest in the cultural and creative industries emerged parallel to the advent of explicit creative industries policies in the recent three decades. From the onset of this creative industries mania, these economic and policy considerations have been explicitly connected to spatial settings, most importantly within the urban context and ‘the art of city making’ (Landry, 2006). In the 1990s, the focus was mainly on flagship projects such as the Guggenheim museum in Bilbao or, closer to home, the Kunsthal in Rotterdam (Mommaas, 2004). In contrast, and partly in relation to severe cutbacks on culture, the period from approximately the 2000s has been characterised first and foremost by the notion of the entrepreneurial, creative city² (Bianchini & Landry, 1995; Landry, 2000; Cooke & Lazzeretti, 2008) and more recently the resurgence of the urban start-up, co-working or maker movements (Capdevila, 2014; Fiorentino, 2018; Merkel, 2015; Moriset, 2013). For urban policies, the catalyst of this creative city debate has been the famous *The Rise of the Creative Class* publication (Florida, 2002), which sealed the bonds between place, creative production and innovation. Clusters³ of creative industries became the vehicle of post-modern innovation, as well as the post-Fordist solution to declining urban economies (Bille & Schulze, 2006; Lash & Urry, 1994; Zukin, 1995).

2 The ‘creative city’ as a policy concept emerged in the mid-1990s and was popularised around 2000. Yet, its meaning has remained exceptionally fuzzy, with the concept changing its meaning throughout the years. In its earliest formulation, ‘creativity’ denoted an approach to understand how creativity helps cities to innovate and solve their problems. In the more recent conceptualisations, it was increasingly tied to cities in which the creative industries were supported and flourishing (Montgomery, 2005). A final interpretation is strongly driven by Florida’s (2002) notion of the creative class, whose presence was supposed to determine the city’s economic success (Comunian, 2011). In either case, and contrary to the co-working and maker movements, such policies were mostly top-down implemented measures to reach economic goals.

3 Clusters are, in the words of Porter (2000), “geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialized suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, and associated institutions [...] in a particular field that compete but also cooperate” (p. 15). In this dissertation, the term cluster is primarily used for small-scale clusters, creative business centres or co-working spaces. Clusters in the terminology of Porter, however, range from very small to encompassing several countries.

Reinterpreting innovation

In line with the emergence of the creative industries, creative cities, the creative class and creative clusters, the conception of innovation has changed too. While traditionally innovation was understood to involve goal-driven, corporate-led and top-down endeavours, more recent interpretations of innovation point towards new bottom-up developed initiatives as pursued by the metropolitan oriented makers movement (Fiorentino, 2018). The traditional approaches, preoccupied with investing in research and development (R&D) and the development of new technologies, have generally been a poor fit to the creative industries, which rarely consider their innovative pursuits as efficient investments in technologies in order to generate novelty (Benghozi & Salvador, 2016; Protogerou, Kontolaimou, & Caloghirou, 2017), but rather as *“those creative efforts that strike the market as unusually distinctive, satisfying, and/or productive in opening new ground”* (Caves, 2000, p. 202).

Nevertheless, these industries are highly dependent on the creation of original and novel works of art, products and services (C. Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen, & Townley, 2016) with their innovation residing mostly in aesthetic properties (semiotic codes) and material bases (C. Jones, Lorenzen, & Sapsed, 2015; see also Stoneman, 2009). Equally important in this regard are the creative industries’ persisting structural characteristics, such as the dominance of freelance, project-based work and informal networks. These characteristics have a tremendous influence on how and what kind of novelties are produced (e.g. ranging from a typical new game (Stoneman, 2009) to something ‘new to the field’ (Castañer & Campos, 2002) such as a crowdfunding revenue model) (Protogerou et al., 2017; Jaw, Chen, & Chen, 2012). It is especially in agglomerative settings, such as creative clusters or, having gained momentum over the last decade, the co-working space, where such innovative capabilities are thought to come to fruition (Capdevila, 2015; Schmidt, Brinks, & Brinkhoff, 2014; Mariotti, Pacchi, & Vita, 2017).

As such, contrary to the persisting romantic myth of the individual artistic genius (Bilton, 2013; Bourdieu, 1993; Hes-

mondhalgh & Pratt, 2005; C. Jones et al., 2016), this pursuit of novelties is, as Jones et al. (2016) put it:

“an organized and organizing activity, which takes on different collaborative forms, such as collaborative circles (Farrell, 2001), projects (DeFillippi, 2015; DeFillippi, Grabber, & Jones, 2007), art worlds (Becker, 1982) and movements (Byrkejeflot, Pedersen, & Svejenova, 2013; Crane, 1987; Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2003). It is a dynamic process that involves field participants, like creators, producers and consumers together with the evaluations by intermediaries (p. 754).

Untying the knot of innovation in the creative industries

Evidently, this convergence of cities and place, the creative industries and innovation, has sparked a great number of expectations, assumptions, but also questions. How can we consider and operationalise innovation in a setting in which traditional measures are strikingly absent? (How) does place contribute to such innovations? What do creative workers gain from flocking together? By exploring ten collaborative creative workplaces in the Netherlands, this dissertation delves into this intersection of place, creative work and innovation and aims to dissect how place-based affordances affect creative workers and potentially contribute to their innovativeness. In this sense, this dissertation pays due attention to the *situatedness* of creative production in acknowledging the vicinity and networks of peers and support systems, and the spatial contexts in which these agents operate. With this *situatedness*, I refer to what Pratt (2011) and Pratt, Gill and Spelthann (2007) see as a sensitivity to the local institutional, social, geographical and regulatory contexts, but also to the idea that what is recognised as creative or innovative resides not just in individual minds, but especially in industrial, social and cultural contexts (Belussi & Sedita, 2008; Potts, Hartley, et al., 2008; see also Sunley, Pinch, & Reimer, 2011).

I thus perceive, in line with Bourdieu (1986, 1993), creative production as a field with economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital shaping work and social practices, taking place

in various milieus, forging enduring connections, conventions and forms of mutual influence and experimentation (Bottero & Crossley, 2011).

Proximity as a proxy for innovation

Recently, collaborative workplaces have risen to the public attention as new, highly innovative and entrepreneurial milieus (e.g. Capdevila, 2013; Niaros, Kostakis, & Drechsler, 2017; Parrino, 2015; Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018; Schmidt, 2019; Schmidt et al., 2014; Butcher, 2018 on co-working spaces, and e.g. Baptista & Swann, 1998; Bathelt, Malmberg, & Maskell, 2004; Chapaín, Cooke, Propriis, MacNeill, & Mateos-Garcia, 2010; Gordon & McCann, 2000; O'Connor, 2004 on creative clusters). These workplaces offer forms of cultural⁴, symbolic⁵ and social⁶ capital not available to creative workers otherwise, including the essential social elements required for collaborative forms of innovation particular to the creative industries (C. Jones et al., 2016; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009).

Interestingly yet not surprisingly, parallel to the emergence of the creative industries as a legitimate field, many cities witnessed the appearance and expansion of collaborative creative workplaces, such as cultural or creative clusters (Cooke & Lazzeretti, 2008; Turok, 2003), brownfields (Andres & Golubchikov, 2016), creative hubs (Evans, 2009; Virani et al., 2016), incubators (Ebberts, 2013), cultural quarters (Hitters & Richards, 2002; Mommaas, 2004), makerspaces (Niaros et al., 2017), open creative spaces (Schmidt, 2019), 'breeding places' (Peck, 2012) and nowadays particularly prominent: co-working spaces (Cap-

4 Referring to the "long-lasting dispositions of the mind and body" (embodied cultural capital), cultural goods (objectified cultural capital) and e.g. educational qualifications (institutionalised cultural capital) (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 17).

5 "Capital-in whatever form-insofar as it is represented, i.e., apprehended symbolically, in a relationship of knowledge or, more precisely, of misrecognition and recognition, presupposes the intervention of the habitus, as a socially constituted cognitive capacity" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 27), or more concisely: the creative workers' prestige or credibility within a social field (Bourdieu, 1993).

6 "The aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 21).

devila, 2015). What all have in common, though, is that they are business centres focussing on freelancers and small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) often operating in the cultural and creative industries.⁷

The extensive popularity of these (creative) collective workplaces has strongly influenced the way in which culture, the arts, the creative industries, as well as innovation and the modern city are debated until this very moment. A large number of nations, regions and cities have spent considerable effort on mapping these creative workers, as well as their workplaces, in spatial and economic charts (HKU, 2010; Lazeretti, Boix, & Capone, 2014; Cunningham & Higgs, 2009; Koops & Rutten, 2017; Bakhshi, Freeman, & Higgs, 2012; Department for Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS], 2001). Whereas these mapping exercises may provide an accurate view of the 'what', the 'how' or 'why' of the relationship between place, the creative industries and innovation remains largely uncovered. Yet, until today, a substantial amount of time and resources is spent on developing and operating such workplaces.

Paradoxes of co/working/spaces

These designated places facilitating co-location and collaboration, presently often conceived in the format of co-working spaces, are, quite literally, conceptualised as the nexus of this new interpretation of innovation. By conjoining the elements of *co*(llaboration), *working* and *space*, they are thought to allow new forms of (spatial) organisation that may contribute to sparking

⁷ This dissertation is concerned with designated spaces (ranging from one room to one or several buildings) housing freelancers and SMEs in the creative industries. As the many terms used for such settings indicate, and as I elaborate upon later in this chapter, there are many different flavours and configurations of such forms of organization. In the absence of a fitting 'general' term (I consider 'clusters' too broad and Schmidt's (2019) proposed 'open creative lab' slightly too 'lablike' for much of the work in the creative industries), such spaces are most often referred to as collaborative or collective workplaces. However, I am also employing different terms in accordance to the literature I am engaging with. More specifically, when I am using the term co-working, I interpret this in a broader sense, including traditional co-working spaces, but also those spaces that can be defined as (creative) collective workplaces.

unplanned, serendipitous encounters and bottom-up collaborative initiatives (Jakonen, Kivinen, Salovaara, & Hirkman, 2017; Moriset, 2013; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017; Olma, 2016; Fabbri, 2016). Their setting as an intermediate organisation (meso-level) between the urban structures (macro-level) and the individual creative worker (micro-level) makes them a sociologically interesting phenomenon – connecting the interactions between 1] the city, its histories and built environment, 2] local and national urban and cultural policies and 3] (freelance) labour market conditions (see also Cohendet, Grandadam, & Simon, 2010; Lange & Schüßler, 2018).

However, this intermediary locus of such spaces also exposes their paradoxical nature. First, the ideology of creative industries innovation, embedded in the discourse of self-employed work and creative entrepreneurship – often loosely connected to the idea of mobile, self-organised, flexible and virtual work (Gandini, 2016; Jakonen et al., 2017; Ross, 2003) – seems to be at odds with the rediscovery of place as articulated in the clustering and co-working rhetoric. While the final decades of the twenty-first century have been characterised by a declining interest in place and the rise of a (digital) nomadic, no-collar (Ross, 2003) class of (tele)workers whose ties to traditional office environments have been irrefutably broken, the number of collaborative workplaces is rising dramatically (DESKMAG, 2019). Work can be and is increasingly done from home, non-places (Augé, 2008) and third places (Oldenburg, 1989). Yet, co-workers are willing to pay an (often substantial) fee renting a desk in a flexible workplace. How is it possible that place, at the same time, is both losing and gaining importance for creative work?

Second, the idea of ‘accelerated’ (or even staged (Goffman, 1959)) serendipity as a catalyst for innovation seems to stand in a remarkable contrast to the organised nature of such workplaces, usually quite curated, structured and imbued with rituals (Blagoev, Costas, & Kärreman, 2019; J. Brown, 2017; Butcher, 2018). If serendipity refers to something inherently unplanned, how can it be captured in specific socio-spatial settings? Of course, this idea is not novel, with e.g. Jacobs’ (1970) seminal thesis on

urban diversity yielding innovative activities having inspired urban policy makers for decades. Yet, where such spatial planning initiatives usually occur on the macro-level, co-working spaces aim to translate and organise this to a micro-management of encounters (Jakonen et al., 2017; see also Goffman, 1961).

Persisting black boxes

This leads to the overarching question of how co-location contributes to innovation for creative entrepreneurs and SMEs. Or, formulated differently, is it possible to disentangle how the different forms of capital creative workers are able to draw from both specific spatial characteristics as well as the vicinity of peers, competitors, potential collaborators, clients and networks contribute to innovation? The early and now classic publications of e.g. Storper (1995), Porter (2000) and Scott (2000) underlined the relevance of co-location for fostering innovation by stressing the importance of face-to-face contact, networking and project-based working (see also e.g. Grabher, 2004). Others, such as Molotch (1996, 2002) and Lloyd (2002) have pointed at the importance of place in terms of innovative identity and reputation. Moreover, despite digitalisation and increasing global connections (Cairncross, 1997; Castells, 1996; Urry, 2002), place has refrained from becoming obsolete (Drake, 2003) and is still charged with historical features and meaning, influencing practices of creative labour (Hutton, 2006; Smit, 2011).

However, does this now, thirty years past the emergence of the creative industries as a legitimate field (Cho, Liu, & Ho, 2018), mean that we have unravelled the black box of innovation (Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009)? The short answer is: not quite. Assumptions about the innovative capabilities of creative workers, such as the idea that the creative industries are inherently innovative and that co-location induces individual and collective innovativeness, have been made, remade, refuted, recontextualised, proclaimed dead and returned to the living. Yet, fully grasping the workers' experiences and innovative practices has remained both a blank spot and a Herculean task (Camelo-Ordaz, Fernández-Alles, Ruiz-Navarro, & Sousa-Ginel, 2012; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009).

In a similar vein, empirical evidence on this presumed relationship, particularly with the interference of place as moderator, is weak, fragmented and limited (Jaaniste, 2009; Lee & Rodríguez-Pose, 2014b; Protogerou et al., 2017; Sunley, Pinch, Reimer, & Macmillan, 2008). Moreover, a systematic understanding of what drives such innovation (C. Jones et al., 2016) and the role of co-location in these processes is absent (Capdevila, 2015; Gandini, 2015; Niaros et al., 2017). Much of the research so far has concentrated either on the micro-, meso- or macro-level, with little attention to the overlaps and synergies between these levels. Finally, existing research on innovation in the creative industries has focussed on the macro-level, while research paying attention to the micro-level, more specifically the experiences of creative workers and entrepreneurs themselves, has remained relatively scarce (Capdevila, 2015; Miles & Green, 2008; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009; Protogerou et al., 2017).

Research question and outline

How can we recognise the innovative capabilities of the creative industries in a way that the alleged (societal) potential of the creative industries can come to full fruition? Drawing upon a set of academic fields and topics, which – notwithstanding their increasing interconnectedness – have hitherto been relatively isolated, including geography, creative labour, entrepreneurship, innovation studies, and (cultural) sociology, I seek to understand these processes of innovation within the specific boundaries of creative workplaces, and how they foster, shape, and are shaped by creative work and production. In particular, this dissertation focusses on the intricate ways in which creative workers engage in the field of cultural production, learn the rules of the game, accumulate and use their capital, and the practical skills and knowledge they need for developing potential innovative output (Bourdieu, 1986, 1993; see also e.g. C. Jones et al., 2016).

Chapter 2-7 present empirical case studies that aim to, step by step, disentangle the relationship between place, the creative industries, and innovation. Overall, it can be divided in three overarching segments.

The first, covering Chapter 2 and 3, seeks to contribute to the existing literature on innovation in general, and the creative industries in particular, by digging deeper into the concept of innovation, and particularly how this is perceived and pursued by creative workers. These two chapters are primarily driven by the problematic nature of innovation in the creative industries, which on the one hand explicitly draws upon the idea that these sectors are inherently innovative (e.g. Müller, Rammer, & Truby, 2009; Handke, 2006; Lash & Urry, 1994), while on the other hand acknowledging the incongruence of applying an etic concept to the creative field (see among many others Stoneman, 2009; Oakley, 2009; Pratt & Gornostaeva, 2009; Jaaniste, 2009).

Building upon qualitative interviews as well as a survey among Dutch creative entrepreneurs, these chapters provide a definition of innovation that does justice to the *situated*, contextualised approach of this dissertation (Chapter 2), and postulate four factors that could potentially catalyse innovation: *passion*, *partnerships*, *peers* and *place* (Chapter 3). While individual, entrepreneurial *passion* to innovate (Schumpeter, 1934; Amabile, 1988; Drucker, 1985; Brandstätter, 2011; see also e.g. the critical perspectives of C. Jones et al., 2016; Gartner, Davidsson, & Zahra, 2006; Zahra & Wright, 2011; Bhansing, Hitters, & Wijn-gaarden, 2018) and *partnerships* with clients and research institutions (Colapinto & Porlezza, 2012; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997) have been addressed quite extensively by e.g. research on management and entrepreneurship, *peers* and *place* are exemplary for the contextual factors distinctly tied to spatial settings and are explored further in the subsequent chapters.

The second part zooms in on *peers*, the influence of the proximity of other creative workers on knowledge exchange, social practices and potentially innovation. Both Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 are concerned with the social capital (J. M. Jacobs, 1962; Bourdieu, 1986) afforded by collective workplaces, but aim to move beyond the proposition that the mere co-location will yield collaborative spirits, bursts of knowledge exchange and innovative outputs (as already questioned by Fuzi, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012). Informed by qualitative, in-depth inter-

views with co-located creative workers, workplace managers and ethnographic fieldwork in such workplaces, both chapters tie the existing, macro-oriented research on most prominently creative clusters, knowledge exchange and innovation (Cooke & Lazzeretti, 2008; O'Connor, 2004; Porter, 1998; Pratt, 1997; Shefer & Frenkel, 1998) to more micro-processes of co-working practices, interactions and rituals.

Chapter 4 questions the assumption that proximity equals collaboration and sparks innovation. Instead, it proposes that proximity does contribute to the development of a fertile learning environment, offering a form of 'surrogate collegiality', in which essential tacit skills required for innovation can be gained and transferred. Chapter 5 dives even deeper in the micro-perspective by exploring not what kind of interactions take place, but rather how such interactions occur in the first place. Inspired by the symbolic interactionist work of Goffman (1959, 1963, 1967) as well as the interaction rituals approach developed by Collins (1981, 2005), it disentangles how proximity could foster optimal conditions that afford the exchange of words to begin with, and the exchange of knowledge as a potential succeeding step in the chain of interactions. In combination, both chapters provide further insights into the promises and practices of co-located creative workers that could, but not necessarily will, foster innovation in the longer run.

Chapters 6 and 7, the third part, concern mainly how *place* provides symbolic capital to creative workers. Though – again – not necessarily being a sufficient condition for innovation, such capital both provides the legitimation required for professional and entrepreneurial success, as well as individual motivation and inspiration (as e.g. put forward by Drake, 2003; Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010). More than the preceding chapters, and building upon in-depth interviews with creative entrepreneurs and workplace managers, they focus on how creative workers engage with their physical and symbolic environments. Chapter 6 emphasises how the proximity of creatives does not necessarily generate collaborative practices (quite similar to the findings of Chapter 4 and 5), but may provide 'artistic dividend' (Markusen

& Schrock, 2006). The presence of other creatives translates into a local, creative reputation that provides a narrative allowing tapping into the creative city discourse and creative and/or professional legitimation and inspiration. Chapter 7 explores how the physical, historical and symbolic value of the (usually post-industrial) building of the creative, shared workplace provides an air of authenticity by commodifying local histories while at the same time adhering to a global narrative of post-industrial aesthetics. Such symbolic spatial assets grant legitimacy and inspiration not available otherwise.

This, in short, comes down to the following research and sub questions:

RQ: (How) does co-location contribute to the self-perceived innovative capabilities of freelancers and SMEs in the creative industries?

Part 1: Innovation in the creative industries

SQ1: Which definition of innovation does justice to the particularities of the creative industries? (Chapter 2)

SQ2: What do creative workers see as sources of their innovativeness? (Chapter 3)

Part 2: Social interaction, proximity and innovation

SQ3: (How) does co-location contribute to social interactions, knowledge exchange and potentially innovation? (Chapter 4)

SQ4: How do such interactions occur and develop in collaborative workplaces? (Chapter 5)

Part 3: Affordances of the symbolic properties of collaborative workplaces

SQ5: How do existing and developing networks and place reputation interact? (Chapter 6)

SQ6: How do the users and managers balance the appeal to global 'creative industries aesthetics' for authenticity and symbolic capital with the desire to preserve and sustain the local historical spaces and symbols? (Chapter 7)

Before presenting the methods, data collection, data analysis and epistemological considerations in the remainder of this chapter, I will first further contextualise these questions by reassessing some relevant concepts and developments mentioned above: innovation in- and outside the creative industries, the urban cultural economy and creative industries (both macro-level changes), social networks, proximity and place (meso-level forms of organisation) and finally propose a more micro-level approach to studying spatialised innovation in the creative industries.

TAKING STOCK OF THREE DECADES OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES RESEARCH

In this section, the core concepts of this dissertation will be explained, starting with a discussion of creativity and innovation. This is followed by an explanation of two major *macro-level* developments driving the paradoxical nature of co-location and co-working spaces: the reinvention of the city as a site for cultural production and the changing labour market conditions in especially the sectors that we now call the creative industries. These two developments require a further explanation of the relationship between place, the creative industries, creative work and their connection to innovation at large. Although this dissertation – in the upcoming empirical studies – will focus mostly on a *micro-level* examination of these factors and how this interacts with *meso-level* conditions, it is first necessary to understand the macro-frameworks of influence. To further clarify the macro-level trends, I then proceed to discuss their implications for the *meso-level* by diving deeper into the persisting importance of place in a global age, and how this materialises in the work and experiences co-located creative labourers. This section ends with a conclusion in which a *micro-approach* to place, creative industries and innovation will be proposed.

Whose innovation, which innovation?

"It is tempting to ask whether innovation and creativity might not be the new 'snake oils'. Certainly, no one has managed to bottle either" (Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009, p. 3).

Unravelling creativity and innovation

In this dissertation, I do not seek to understand or delineate the particular types of innovation, but rather how creative workers perceive this innovativeness, and especially in which contexts this may occur (i.e. their *practices*). As I explained in the introduction, the concepts of creative work, innovation and place have been increasingly and intricately linked. Innovation and creativity in the context of the creative industries, nevertheless, seem to be used interchangeably, with both bearing equal neoliberal appraise and romantic idealism (Oakley, 2009). As Pratt and Jeffcutt (2009) sharply observe: *"which person, group, firm, city or region would aspire to be uncreative (and not innovative)? Put in this way, of course, nobody"* (p. 3). They present both concepts as being used as 'magic bullets' or 'snake oils', thrown at problems – see e.g. the opening quote of this dissertation – yet without much clarity on what they mean (and whether and where they differ). Are they one and the same? The answer to this question depends on the context and (academic) field, yet there are some overarching guidelines on which most researchers seem to agree.

Before aiming to disentangle both concepts, I would first like to point out that this dissertation is about the creative industries, but not essentially about creativity. It intends to unravel the (perhaps Gordian) knot on the intersection of creative work, place and innovation. Does this mean that it is inherently about creativity? My answer would be: partly yes, but to a larger extent, no. To start with the latter: the creative industries are – literally – considered as being creative. Are they necessarily? This question is surprisingly difficult to answer. The reason for that lies in the former. Quoting the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) (2001) definition of the creative industries: *"[they] have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and [...] have the po-*

tential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property” (p. 4). Following this line of thought, creativity is at the centre of creative work. Yet, what does creativity mean in this context, and how does it relate to innovation?

Despite the various perspectives on what both terms mean (also in relation to each other) (Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009), most researchers seem to agree on the proposition that creativity is the ‘idea’ part of innovation. Some see it as an individual trait, yet others – more in line with the positioning of this dissertation – as a collective effort or process informed by various (social) factors (Amabile, 1988; Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005). Innovation, then, is usually considered the implementation or extension of such ideas, in which “*a raw creative idea is converted into an innovative product or service*” (Bilton, 2009, p. 23). Innovation is built on elements of creativity and is – and this is also the perspective I take in this dissertation – most notably considered the successful implementation of creative ideas (Amabile et al., 2005). Creativity, therefore, is an essential prerequisite, but on its own not the same as innovation. Yet, innovation is usually considered more than just the execution of creative ideas and, especially within the creative industries, drawing the line between the two seems to be difficult. Therefore, the next section will dive deeper into the history and applications of the concept of innovation.

*A very brief history of innovation*⁸

The creative industries in general, and the co-located creative industries in particular, are imbued in a discourse of innovation. These industries are increasingly considered one of the drivers of innovation (Castañer & Campos, 2002; Comunian, Chapain, & Clifton, 2010; Cooke & De Propriis, 2011; Handke, 2006; Miles & Green, 2008; Müller et al., 2009). For example, these industries are believed to provide new ideas and innovative input to the ‘general economy’ (they ‘produce’ R&D (Lash & Urry, 1994)), while fostering adaptations and new developments by

⁸ Chapter 2 provides a more in-depth discussion of the definition of innovation.

the usage of new technologies (Müller et al., 2009). However, innovation thrives on an incoherent conceptualisation and a plethora of meanings, built on only scarce empirical evidence (Lee & Drever, 2013; Sunley et al., 2008).

Originally, innovation was coined by researchers involved in economics and engineering. An important scholar in the early discussion of the concept of innovation was Joseph Schumpeter, who considered the entrepreneur playing the principle role in innovative production (Schumpeter, 1939, 1934). Innovation to him, in short, was defined as a new combination of means of production, distinguishing it from invention, which "*is without importance to economic analysis*" (p. 85) and mere reproductions of existing business models (Schumpeter, 1939). Some two decades later, especially outside the prestigious universities, innovation emerged as a separate, autonomous field of study (e.g. Freeman, 1974 in Europe; and Arrow, 1962; and Romer, 1990 in the United States). Economists in these years treated innovation mostly in terms of allocation of resources to R&D (in contrast to other ends) and the economic effects of innovation. Important in this respect was also the development of the Frascati (published from the 1960s – on R&D) and Oslo manuals (from the 1990s – on innovation).

These manuals, historically, focussed on innovations in terms of R&D expenditure in sectors such as industrial production and agriculture.⁹ The OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) coined this approach technological product and processes (TPP) innovation.

9 The later versions, though, have increasingly distinguished the multiple forms innovation can take, among which product innovation, the introduction of a significantly improved (in terms of technology, materials, uses) goods or services; process innovation, the implementation of a significantly improved or new processes of production or delivery; organisational innovation, the implementation of a new organisational method in business practices, organisations or relations and finally, marketing innovation, the implementation of new marketing methods, including significant new design, packaging or promotion (OECD, 2006).

The cultural turn and innovation

The social sciences have in the recent decades become subject to a ‘cultural turn’, shifting attention from (functional) social, political and economic structures to culture and beliefs (Gar-nham, 2005; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009). Around the turn of the millennium, this too translated to a growing interest in the creative industries, which in itself became subject to growing expectations and interests from policy makers and researchers. More specifically for the creative industries, this interest shifted to the industries’ entrepreneurial cultures, economic contributions and especially innovation (C. Gibson & Klocker, 2005).

Yet, despite the growing number of publications on innovation in cultural settings and particularly the creative industries, the term has remained notoriously diffuse in definition and description. This is partly an inheritance of the dominance of the TPP definitions outlined by the Frascati and Oslo manuals, which poorly fit sectors other than the technological. Nevertheless, a number of researchers have aimed to develop definitions of innovations more suitable to the peculiarities of the creative industries, such as stylistic innovation (Cappetta, Cillo, & Ponti, 2006) and formal innovation (G. Bianchi & Bartolotti, 1996). Both of these, however, mainly attempt to cover one aspect of a product: their aesthetic or symbolic value.

Other definitions offer a broader approach. Miles and Green (2008) and Green, Miles and Rutter (2007), for example, argue that in the creative industries, innovations do not occur only in R&D laboratories, but often simply ‘on the job’ in ‘everyday problem solving’ or in interaction with consumers – a form that is missed in most measures of innovation and is therefore hidden. Stoneman’s (2009) soft innovation refers to innovation in goods and services that mainly affect the aesthetic or intellectual appeal rather than functional performance of a product. Besides giving alternative definitions, some authors explicitly differentiate the creative industries innovations from other, often technological innovations. Caves (2000) sees creative industries innovation primarily in terms of process innovation, new combinations of existing elements or fringe styles. Pratt and Gor-

nostaeva (2009) emphasise that innovation in the creative industries is not a technological big bang, but rather a more organic and systemic process that is influenced by complex structures in regulation and the market. Cultural product and process (CPP) innovation – the creative counterpart of TPP innovation – is based on the expressive-reflexive knowledge systems of the humanities and social sciences and copyrighted products (Jaaniste, 2009).

There have been very few empirical studies that considered the innovation processes within the creative industries. Aside some specific industries cases (e.g. Cohendet & Simon, 2007; Grantham & Kaplinsky, 2005; Hotho & Champion, 2011; Lazzeretti, 2013; Tschang, 2007) or studies aiming to measure or map the scope of innovation in specific regions (e.g. Chapain et al., 2010; Grantham & Kaplinsky, 2005; Lazzeretti, 2013; Lazzeretti et al., 2014; Lee & Drever, 2013), the actual forms and shapes of the creative industries in terms of innovation is still an understudied subject.

As such, despite the plethora of studies presuming the innovative activities of the creative industries, and the many conceived sources of innovation, the actual processes of innovation taking place in creative work are predominantly still a black box. As Pratt and Jeffcutt (2009) argue, traditional measures of innovation will hardly provide deeper insights in creative innovation. They propose a more qualitative approach by primarily focussing on formal and informal interactions. This dissertation aims to proceed this line of thought in order to refine the current understanding of innovation in the creative industries by looking at the micro-level and its interactions with the meso-level in creative work in relation to innovation.

The spatial turn in innovation research

In addition to the cultural turn inseparably connecting the two hitherto incompatible concepts of cultural production and innovation, innovation was subject of a different kind of turn as well: the 'spatial turn' (Amin & Cohendet, 2004). Especially since the 1980s, research on innovation has increasingly acknowledged

the spatiality of processes of learning and knowledge exchange. Amin and Cohendet (2004) distinguish two major forms of spatiality influencing the innovativeness of firms. The first one, less relevant for this dissertation, refers to national systems of innovation (Lundvall, 1992) and emphasises the influence of mostly national institutions as a resource fostering innovation. The second one, which I will discuss in greater depth later in this section, concerns the idea that agglomeration and spatial proximity promotes innovation.

This second form of spatiality is supported by the traditional proposition in economics that (especially urban) proximity decreases transaction costs and stimulates knowledge flows through firm linkages and inter-firm contact (see e.g. Glaeser, 1998; Porter, 1995), as well by the growing literature on tacit knowledge. Tacit knowledge is thought to facilitate learning by doing, social learning and the exchange of knowledge not available through codified channels (Nooteboom, 2000). Important here too is the assumption that tacit learning is dependent upon relational conditions, including face-to-face interactions, networking, trust and cultural proximity, each of which are facilitated and promoted by spatial proximity (see among others Banks, Lovatt, O'Connor, & Raffo, 2000; Bathelt et al., 2004; Ettlenger, 2003; Gertler, 2008). The focus of this approach thus lies on interactions – ranging from macro to micro – in cities, clusters (Amin & Cohendet, 2004), or in the case of this dissertation, workplaces. The next sections will address the intersections of place, the creative industries and innovation on the macro- and meso-level, and build towards the micro-level approach that I will pursue in this dissertation.

Macro-level changes

Why we think about the urban when we talk about the creative industries

The city “is not a spatial entity with social consequences, but a sociological entity that is formed spatially” (Simmel, in Frisby & Featherstone, 1997, p. 131).

Due to the suburbanization of the urban middleclass and the outsourcing of traditional manufacturing industries, mid-century Western metropolises were in drastic need of reinvention. Former industrial neighbourhoods had become derelict sites of urban decay, and cities were forced to rethink their development and policies. A few decades later, the twenty-first century city is no longer the manufacturing and production deprived area it used to be. In fact, the inner city has seen the return of production districts, the emergence of clusters of new industries - both spontaneous and policy invoked - and the reoccurrence of the comingling of leisure and work (Hutton, 2006). Sassen (1994) and Castells (1996) underscored cities' renewed importance as 'nodes' and 'powerhouses' in global networks. This resurgence of the city is the result of three parallel developments.

First, the character of the urban production sector changed. In the last decades, the aesthetics and 'sign value' (Lash & Urry, 1994) of products have become inextricably connected with especially cultural and creative production. The emergence of a 'symbolic economy' emphasises a shift to a more culture focussed consumption and production pattern (Zukin, 1995). Similarly, Amin (1994; see also Garnham, 2005) argued that the building blocks of this post-Fordist economy – design, innovation, knowledge technologies and communication – especially come to fruition in cities. Scott (1997) stated that we are witnessing a *"very marked convergence between the spheres of cultural and economic development,"* and that *"capitalism itself is moving into a phase in which the cultural form and earnings of its outputs become critical if not dominating elements of productive strategy"* (p. 323) (see also Lash & Urry, 1994). Culture has thus become an important source of economic growth and job creation, especially in the Western metropolises (Department for Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS], 2007; Kloosterman, 2004). This transformation had a profound spatial influence on the reconstruction of urban landscapes in which much of this culture is produced and consumed (Hutton, 2006; see also e.g. Massey, 1984).¹⁰

10 Hutton focusses here on the postmodern built forms, but I would argue that the adaptive reuse of industrial buildings is a particular postmodern metropolitan spatial form.

Second, specific policies have also profoundly influenced the process of urban and creative clustering, as clusters have become a ‘toolkit’ (cf. Landry, 2000) for urban planners and cultural consultants seeking to attract new jobs, CEOs and elite consumers by investing in (often visible) cultural infrastructures (Pratt, 2008a). Even though the idea of clustering (Marshall, 1919) has been promoted for almost a century, authors such as Landry (2000, 2006) and Florida (2002) popularised the (not undisputed) notion of the creative cluster as the main reference point for the cultural economy and innovation. Policies stimulating urban and creative clustering emerged from the late 1990s, starting in the United Kingdom and rapidly spreading to continental Europe, Asia and North America (Gong & Hassink, 2017). These policies were developed with the aim of reaching five goals: urban regeneration, supporting the cultural sectors, enhancing artistic and cultural heritage, supporting creativity and innovation and strengthening the local identity¹¹ (Cinti, 2008). Doing this, urban policy makers tapped into a variety of discursive fields in the process of creative cluster development, such as place marketing, the revitalisation and commercialisation of the cultural field, finding a use for old, often industrial buildings, promoting cultural diversity and democracy and, most relevant for this dissertation, stimulating innovation (Andres & Golubchikov, 2016; Gainza, 2018; Grodach, Currid-Halkett, Foster, & Murdoch, 2014; Mommaas, 2004).

Third, the creative industries themselves have demonstrated a particular appetite for agglomeration in urban, preferably metropolitan areas (Scott, 2000).¹² Since the late 1960s, a growing number of artists and the cultural middle class found their homes in declining, abandoned industrial buildings at the inner city’s fringes, many of which endowed with all the features

11 See Chapter 7 of this dissertation for a more in-depth discussion of the influence of local identities on creative clusters (and co-working spaces).

12 Though they are increasingly also to be found in rural areas (Harvey, Hawkins, & Thomas, 2012) or ‘ordinary’ cities (Wijngaarden, Hitters, & Bhansing, 2019a - Chapter 6 of this dissertation; C. Gibson, 2010; C. Gibson, Luckman, & Willoughby-Smith, 2010; see also for example the recent publication of Kagan, Kirchberg, & Weisenfeld, 2019).

of Fordist-era construction (Zukin, 1982). These groups were mainly attracted to workplaces offered by the central – yet affordable – urban fringe (Banks et al., 2000; Gainza, 2018; Zukin, 1982). Others contended that mainly the spatial scale of the urban region attracted the creative workers (see among others Evans, 2009; Hall, 2000; J. Brown, 2015; O’Connor, 2004; Pratt, 1997; Scott, 1999, 2000; Smit, 2011). Next to urbanity, factors as rents, the vicinity of art schools and relevant networks, and workplace adaptability are considered important aspects in the preferences, stimuli and success of creative workers (Gainza, 2018; Montanari, Scapolan, & Mizzau, 2018; Montgomery, 2007).

From the 1990s, economic geographers started linking this research on networks and agglomeration externalities to the context of the creative industries (Hesmondhalgh, 2012), with this idea of co-location being exceptionally influential in how we perceive innovation and creative work on the meso- and micro-level. Nevertheless, the appetite for urban agglomeration is induced too by other macro-level developments regarding the creative industries as a discursive field and practice, which will be addressed prior to diving into the the meso- and micro-level. *Creative work: the forerunner of the post-Fordist economy?*

“Just imagine how good it feels to wake up every morning and really look forward to work. Imagine how good it feels to use your creativity, your skills, your talent to produce a film [...] or to edit a magazine. [...] Are you there? Does it feel good?” Quoted in Nixon and Crewe (2004, p. 129).

This well-known and often criticised quote stems from the United Kingdom’s DCMS, the Design Council and the Arts Council of England (2001). While claims like these are nowadays usually met with suspicion equal to the decoying emails offering million-dollar inheritances and face creams promising eternal youth, this is indicative of the sentiments surrounding creative work in the new millennium. Moreover, it helps us to get a grip on the conceptualisation and position of ‘creative work’ in today’s world.

Creative work is most often defined as work in the creative industries, the industries that – reiterating the DCMS (2001) definition – “*have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property*” (p. 4) and that are “*supplying goods and services that we broadly associate with cultural, artistic, or simply entertainment value*” (Caves, 2000, p. 1). From the production side, they are considered to be involved in the production of social meaning and deal primarily with the industrial production and circulation of texts (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). In the DCMS (2001) conceptualisation, the creative industries capture the sub-sectors of advertising, architecture, the art and antiques market, crafts, design, designer fashion, film and video, interactive leisure software, music, the performing arts, publishing, software and computer services, television and radio.

The origin of this term can be traced back to Adorno and Horkheimer, who coined it ‘the culture industry’ (1944). Compared to the current day’s adoration, however, their analysis was much gloomier. For them, culture had an idealist perspective, representing the “*exceptional forms of human creativity*” having the ability to provide alternative human conditions (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p. 24). With its commodification and ‘industrialisation’, they argued, culture lost its utopian capacities and alienated artists from creative production (Garnham, 2005). From the late twentieth century, this perception of the culture industries¹³ took a more positive angle. Especially in the final years of the millennium, loosely translated into the term ‘creative industries’, it became an influential buzzword in policy discourses, initially in the United Kingdom, but soon spreading all over the globe.

13 With many researchers (e.g. Miège, 1989) changing the singular form to plural – the cultural industries - to do justice to the complexities of the industries and the different logics at work (Hesmondhalgh, 2012; Lange & Schüßler, 2018).

In these discourses¹⁴, abstract notions about the *functions* of creativity, creative work and especially the creative class (Florida, 2002; see also Pratt, 2008a) became determinants of local and national cultural policies, with policies often quite literally ruminating Florida's terminology (Grodach, 2013; C. Gibson & Klocker, 2004; Evans, 2009) without paying much attention to the dynamics of the local production systems and practices of (creative) workers (Scott, 2007). This cannot be seen independently from neoliberal (cultural) management policies, which promoted individual creativity and, as a result, imported the hitherto considered incompatible concepts of innovativeness and entrepreneurialism into the discourse of cultural production (Hesmondhalgh, 2012; Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005; C. Jones et al., 2016).¹⁵

The creative industries too are characterised by freelance work, with freelancers usually defined as "*skilled professional workers who are neither employers nor employees, supplying labour on a temporary basis under a contract for services for a fee to a range of business clients*" (Kitching and Smallbone, 2008, p. v, cited in Merkel, 2019, p. 531). Indicative for such freelance work is that it takes place in urban (Merkel, 2019) mixed economies of creative labour (Banks, 2007; McRobbie, 1998) consisting of multiple for-

14 Without wanting to do anything close to discourse analysis, my interpretation of discourse here is rather Foucauldian, in the sense that I perceive it as a system producing knowledge and meaning, forming specific materialities (in this case, I see co-working spaces as such an effect) and related to the historical configuration of power structures (which emphasises the ties to the neoliberal ideology) (see Foucault, 1982).

15 This does not mean that the current term of creative industries is uncontested. On the contrary, some authors, including Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005) articulate their preference for the alternate formulation of 'the cultural industries', as, they argue, creativity is not just a distinguishing character of the creative industries, nor does it justice to the historical character of cultural production (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). Other alternative terms have also been proposed, including the cultural economy (Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009; Scott, 2000; C. Gibson & Kong, 2005) and media industries (Deuze, 2007, 2009; Mayer, Banks, & Caldwell, 2009). Nevertheless, considering the dominance of the term creative industries, both in policy as well in academic discourses (Galloway & Dunlop, 2007), I will confine myself to the creative industries (while acknowledging the limitations of this concept).

mal, informal, ‘black’ and barter economies, or even forms of free labour (Alacovska, 2018). This development sparked a large number of researchers in especially critical labour studies to investigate the working conditions and experiences of freelance workers in general, and particularly within the creative industries (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Conor, Gill, & Taylor, 2015; Gill, 2014; Gill & Pratt, 2008; McRobbie, 2002; Ross, 2009).

As creative workers have been considered as more deeply intrinsically motivated compared to their non-creative counterparts (Cnossen, Loots, & Van Witteloostuijn, 2017; Loots & Witteloostuijn, 2018), work may become more of a vocation than a business. Obviously, this has advantages in e.g. perceived freedom and autonomy (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010; Banks, 2010), expressive qualities of work (Banks, 2007), abundance of ‘leisure culture’ (McRobbie, 2002) and passion for work (Bhansing et al., 2018). Yet, a large portion of the creative workforce – especially women and minorities (Eikhof & Warhurst, 2013; Gill & Pratt, 2008; McRobbie, 2016) – experiences low pay, (social) insecurity, (self-)exploitation, the encroachment of work into leisure time, and uncertain, irregular and bulimic work patterns (see among others Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010; Gielen, 2009; Pratt, 2002; McRobbie, 2002, 2016).

Especially for the creative industries, such labour market conditions have been particularly decisive and increasingly normalised, with the flexible yet vulnerable labour force branded as the *precarariat* – the neoliberal, post-Fordist equivalent of the traditional proletariat (Ross, 2008). Such precariousness concerns “*all forms of insecure, contingent, flexible work – from illegalised, casualised and temporary employment, to homeworking, piecework and freelancing*” (Gill & Pratt, 2008, p. 3). While this evidently plays out at the micro-level of the – often self-employed – creative worker, it has roots in macro-level social and policy developments. Especially the neoliberal redefinition of work, with its entrepreneurialisation, actualisation and management of the self (Bandinelli & Gandini, 2019; De Peuter, 2014; Gill, 2010), has profoundly influenced the (self)perception of freelance workers.

Important here too are the affordances of digital technologies, evoking a presumed 'death of geography' (Morgan, 2004; Pratt, 2002) or 'death of distance' (Cairncross, 1997). Such twenty-first century information and communication technologies allow knowledge and creative workers to work from any place at any time, or in other words, "*detaches economic activity from its geographical and socio-economic context*" (Clare, 2013, p. 52). Yet, despite these modern transport opportunities and the growing digitalisation (Toffler, 1984), especially urbanists and geographers have emphasised the persisting importance of place¹⁶ and proximity in the creative industries (Boden & Molotch, 1994; Gertler, 1995). These macro-level social changes – including the renewed interest in cities as sites of cultural production, the retraction of the welfare state and increasingly flexible, fragmented and precarious (creative) labour market – are reflected in new forms of social organisation, perhaps most visibly in the rise of co-working spaces (Spinuzzi, Bodrožić, Scaratti, & Ivaldi, 2019).

Meso-level: Collaborative workplaces: social capital and place

As touched upon in the previous section, freelancers are navigating a relatively placeless and casualised job market while at the same time bearing the full responsibilities and risks of their careers (e.g. McRobbie, 2016). Many of these freelancers in the creative industries, especially those in the increasingly expanding digital sectors, need little more than a laptop and a Wi-Fi connection, which has detached them from the traditional office workplaces. Quite paradoxically though, many seek to work in the proximity of other freelancers (e.g. Bathelt, 2005), and in more social and spatially fixed settings than required by their freelance work practices (Bandinelli & Gandini, 2019; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017). These (assumed) social and spatial affordances will be discussed in the following sections.

¹⁶ I conceive place, in line with Gieryn (2000) as a geographic location that has a material form and is invested with meaning and value. A space, conversely, would be a place devoid of meaning, people, representation, practices, etc. However, throughout the literature, these two seem to be used interchangeably (note the term co-working spaces). As such, I will follow this guideline, except when the literature I am relating to (e.g. citing) imposes otherwise.

Social networks

“Freelancers can be seen to have a role, but not a place” (Mould, Vorley, & Liu, 2014, p. 2442), *or do they?*

A preliminary solution to the individual work/collective setting paradox can be formulated following the macro-developments outlined above. In order to traverse the minefield of the neo-liberal labour market (Banks, 2007), many creative workers expand their spheres of business and become part of an (urban) community by active and passive networking (Neff, Wissinger, & Zukin, 2005). New ties of trust are thought to help in breaking down industry boundaries, and are essential to the creative process, stimulating unforeseen collaborations or new cultural products. Moreover, as creatives more often derive motivation from production, they are more inclined to stay self-employed or a micro-company (Loots & Witteloostuijn, 2018). As a result, they are dependent upon collaboration with others for larger projects. Caves (2000) calls this the ‘motley crew property’ of the creative industries. These networks or communities are often established and grounded in cultural facilities. Third places such as cafes, bars, restaurants or clubs supplement or replace the second place¹⁷ of the traditional workplace in their importance for exchanging ideas and facilitating these networks in after-work socialising (Oldenburg, 1989; see also Currid, 2007; Neff et al., 2005).

As such, working in a communal setting, such as a co-working space, can be a strategic means to minimise labour market insecurities (Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017). These coping mechanisms, increasingly essential for surviving in an increasingly volatile, informal and risky independent labour market, are not just driven by financial considerations such as low fees, but also by overcoming the isolation of freelance work and getting access to the relevant pools of know-how (Merkel, 2019). Most prominently though, they could grant access to the social capital – *“the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession*

¹⁷ With home being the first place (Oldenburg, 1989).

of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 21) and the relevant entrepreneurial and skills and attitudes compulsory for contemporary creative work (Butcher, 2018).¹⁸

Usually "*conceived as office-renting facilities where workers hire a desk and a wi-fi connection [... and] where impendent professionals live their daily routines side-by-side with professional peers, largely working in the same sector*" (Gandini, 2015, pp. 194–195), co-working is a typical urban phenomenon (Schmidt, 2019) that rose to mythical proportions over the last decade. Only in 2005, the first co-working space appeared in San Francisco. In these founding years, co-working mainly revolved around the normative values of accessibility, openness, sustainability, community, and collaboration (Capdevila, 2015; Gandini, 2015), as later explicitly formulated in the Coworking Manifesto (2014). Nevertheless, nowadays, there is a growing diversity in such workplaces, with on the one hand the global 'WeWork' and similar enterprises, building upon a commercial, profit-driven business model and housing hundreds to sometimes even thousands of freelancers and SMEs, and on the other hand a persisting group of 'independent', grassroots workplaces often receiving some form of public support and articulating values of authenticity, community and common resources (Avdikos & Kalogeresis, 2017; Merkel, 2019; Schmidt, 2019).

Collaborative workplaces have been heterogeneous too in the sense that they usually are open to any occupation, sector or status (Parrino, 2015), though they tend to be used primarily by freelancers working in one of the creative sectors (Spinuzzi, 2012; Waters-Lynch, Potts, Butcher, Dodson, & Hurley, 2016). Taking off especially after the financial crisis and with the rise in precarious working conditions (Avdikos & Kalogeresis, 2017; De Peuter, Cohen, & Saraco, 2017; Merkel, 2019), the number

18 Though these workplaces are distinctive from the corporate worlds in terms of autonomy and human self-recognition, they are not undisputedly utopic solutions. Ross (2003) argues how the 'humane', flexible workspace also serves to commodify human creativity and playfulness.

of such spaces by the end of 2019 is projected to be around 22.400 (DESKMAG, 2019).

Also in the Netherlands, one can find a large number of co-working spaces, especially in urban areas. Though it is difficult to estimate the exact number, there are a few indicators that the density of collaborative workplaces in the Netherlands is high. Only the larger co-working operators already own some 280 spaces,¹⁹ yet this figure does not include all of the international co-working operators (e.g. Seats2Meet), let alone the many independent co-working spaces. Moreover, the Netherlands has a particularly strong history of transforming industrial buildings into creative collaborative workplaces (see Chapter 7 of this dissertation), with approximately thirty of them united under the banner of the national Dutch Creative Residency (DCR) Network.²⁰ Such buildings can be organised similar to co-working spaces, with several users co-locating in one or more designated rooms, but can also refer to more hybrid forms in which some facilities or areas (e.g. kitchens, pantries, meeting rooms) are shared, yet the offices themselves tend to be separated. Only in the Amsterdam region, some 60 buildings²¹ have been transformed into such ‘breeding places’ (*broedplaatsen*) housing usually self-employed creative entrepreneurs. Therefore, based on this data, one can easily deduct that there must be at least a few hundred collaborative workplaces spaces in The Netherlands.

This rise is reflected in an ever increasing number of publications on co-working, most of them focusing especially on community and collaboration (Spinuzzi et al., 2019), for example from sociological (Gandini, 2015; Garrett, Spreitzer, & Bacevice, 2017; Ivaldi, Pais, & Scaratti, 2018; Merkel, 2019; Moriset, 2013), management, entrepreneurship and organisation (Blagoev et al., 2019; Bouncken & Reuschl, 2018; Butcher, 2018) or planning and economic geographical (Avdikos & Kalogeresis, 2017; J. Brown, 2017; Capdevila, 2013; Parrino, 2015) perspec-

19 See <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1031577/largest-coworking-space-companies-in-the-netherlands/> (accessed August 14, 2019).

20 See <https://dcrnetwork.nl/> (accessed August 14, 2019).

21 See <https://www.amsterdam.nl/kunst-cultuur/ateliers/broedplaatsen/> (accessed August 14, 2019).

tives. Nevertheless, what all publications have in common is the acknowledgement of the importance of proximity and space.

Proximity and place

"So places [...] are best thought of not so much as enduring sites but as moments of encounter, not so much as 'presents', fixed in space and time, but as variable events; twists and fluxes of interrelation" (Amin & Thrift, 2002, p. 30).

Place matters, because social networks are grounded in particular places where culture is produced and consumed. Firms profit from being located in the proximity of other creative firms, as this gives opportunities for (serendipitous) encounters (Amin & Thrift, 2002; Hall, 1998) and the exchange of informal and tacit knowledge (Gertler, 2003; O'Connor, 2004). Banks et al. (2000) demonstrate that new ties of trust help in breaking down industry boundaries, and are essential to the creative process, stimulating unforeseen collaborations or new cultural products. These contacts may be formal, but often occur spontaneously (see also Bathelt et al., 2004). In this way, places are assumed to contribute to social interactions and exchange of information, ideas and innovation (Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010; Scott, 1999, 2006). Proximity has, for a long time, been considered an important source of inspiration for creative workers (Drake, 2003).

The underlying principle here lies in the changes in labour market structures outlined above. As, among others, Giddens (1991) has pointed out, traditional life courses, as well as certain and stable work practices have disappeared over the last few decades. Individuals have to find their ways while enduring 'necessity of choices' and risks of the modern social order (Banks et al., 2000). In this discourse, geographers pointed out the importance of proximity as key to gaining access to the relevant networks and the informal access to local rumours, impressions, recommendations, trade folklore and strategic misinformation (see also Pratt, 2002). Or, in other words, they considered the exposure to 'noise' or 'buzz' essential assets of co-location (see

also Asheim, Coenen, & Vang, 2007; Gertler, 2008; Grabher, 2002a; Storper & Venables, 2004). Significant too here is the growing importance of project based working in society in general (Grabher, 2002), and the creative industries specifically (Neff et al., 2005), for which access to informal information or gossip about potential collaborators is crucial.

Nevertheless, much of the creative industries and especially clustering literature from the late 1990s to the early 2010s emphasised the relevance of spatial proximity through a macro- or meso-lens (Cooke & Lazzeretti, 2008; Florida, 2002; Lazzeretti et al., 2014; Power, 2002), looking mainly at larger corporations or the urban or regional context.²² Yet, the rapid rise in collaborative workplaces has both permitted and demanded an increased interest in the importance of space from a micro-perspective of social proximity. Collaborative workplaces are theorised by Capdevila (2013) as urban microclusters, bearing similar characteristics to the macro-level industrial clusters in terms of knowledge dynamics and innovative capacities, but obviously on a much smaller scale.

As such, co-location cannot be explained only from the perspective of precarious labour market conditions as outlined above. There is also another narrative at stake: that of *spatiality* fostering innovation in such spaces. For example, similar to the clustering discourses peaking around the turn of the millennium, the contemporary co-working hype too is infused with a promise of innovation through spatial proximity (Capdevila, 2015; Gandini, 2015; Niaros et al., 2017). However, the evidence for the role of co-working spaces (or agglomeration in general) for innovation processes tends to be anecdotal, with some researchers warning against the overly high expectations of the innovative potential of such collaborative workplaces (Brinks, 2019; Schmidt, 2019). Existing research on innovation in co-working spaces, for instance, is often informed by research on larger

22 Clusters in the original terminology of Porter (2000), popularised in the 1990s, range from very small to encompassing several countries, with much of the earlier literature focussing primarily on the larger scale. However, increasingly, such concepts have been applied to more micro-setting, including neighbourhoods and even individual buildings.

firms (Schmidt, 2019; see e.g. Richter, Jackson, & Schildhauer, 2018; Suire, 2019) outside of the creative industries.

Rather than being the drivers or initiators of innovation, Schmidt (2019) argues that collaborative workplaces are better considered as being embedded within spatio-temporal innovation processes. More specifically, this means that they are conceptualised as intermediaries between the individual creative worker and larger firms (Capdevila, 2015) or as platforms potentially affording innovative outcomes. In a similar vein, Cohendet, Grandadam, and Simon (2010) consider such community oriented spaces to be a 'middleground' essential for connecting the creative individuals of the 'underground' to the 'upperground' of more established firms and institutions experienced in both the development of innovative ideas as well the subsequent marketisation. It is in this connection where place-based externalities and innovations may emerge (see also Lange & Schübler, 2018), with co-working spaces being "*novel but complementary structures in localized innovation systems*" (Schmidt, 2019, p. 6). Therefore, in sum, I perceive co-working spaces as having an intermediary function in the urban organisation of creative work, as well as in fostering the industries' innovative potential. Yet, how this connection is constructed, negotiated and commodified – both in terms of social as well as cultural and symbolic capital – is still subject to closer scrutiny, which I do in this dissertation.

A micro-approach to place, creative industries and innovation

Particularly, I am interested in the relationship between (the urban) place, creative work and innovation from a micro-level, *lived* experience. In this, I am loosely inspired by the work of Soja (1996), who, drawing upon Lefebvre (1992) puts forward a trialectic approach to understanding spaces²³ – most prominently the idea of Thirdspace (not to be confused with third places

23 Soja (1996) uses the word 'space' differently from Gieryn (2000) mentioned earlier in this section. In Soja's work, spaces are not quite devoid of meaning. On the contrary. The way he conceptualises 'space' fits well with how 'place' is usually understood.

introduced earlier in this chapter (Oldenburg, 1989)). The purpose of such a trialectic approach lies in the ambition to move beyond the traditional dualistic view of space, usually differentiating only the spatial practices or representations.

In a nutshell, Soja discerns a Firstspace, *perceived* space or the ‘things in space’ perspective (Borch, 2002). This designates the spatial configuration of a space: the built form in an urban (or rural) setting. This lens allows the mapping, measurement and a relatively easy description of a place, which would entail the spatial setting of a collaborative workplace, both internally as well as in a broader urban context. The Secondspace is what he calls the *conceived* space or ‘thoughts about space’ (Borch, 2002). Secondspace is a mostly symbolic or ‘imagined’ space, driven by an ideal or existing theme. More concretely, this could refer to the conceptualisation: what are these spaces considered to represent? Such a representation includes the branding of a co-working space, the values it aims to transmit, the language, the logos, the discourses, or the adherence to a given ideal (e.g. the Coworking Manifesto, 2014).

Where much of the existing literature has focussed upon the conceived practices of creative clusters, agglomeration in creative workplaces and co-working (e.g. management, organisation, location within the city) or the representation of such workplaces (e.g. the co-working theme or ideal), the *lived* experiences of creative workers from a micro-perspective – especially concerning agglomeration and innovation – are only captured superficially. In other words, much attention has been paid to the *discourses* surrounding place, creative work and innovation, but the *practices* remain much less unveiled. Yet, it is this micro-level where much of both the organisation of the ‘middleground’ – the meso-level of the co-working space – and the underground – the (freelance) creative worker – is constructed, altered, contested and negotiated (Cohendet et al., 2010; see also Lange & Schüßler, 2018; Merkel, 2015) (See Table 1).

Table 1: Macro-, meso- and micro-perspectives on co-working spaces

City/urban context	Macro	Upperground
(Collaborative) workplace	Meso	Middleground
Freelancers	Micro	Underground

In line with Massey (2005) and Merkel (2019), I see (co-working) spaces as co-constitutive and as processes. Spaces play essential and active roles in the formation and reproduction of entrepreneurial or creative identities (Merkel, 2019). There is a need to reconsider how creative workers shape community *practices* in co-working spaces, but also to focus on the effect of such communities on creative workers themselves. Former studies on co-working spaces are often informed by qualitative interviews, questioning co-workers and space managers on e.g. collaboration, social organisation or management procedures. Additionally, a large number too take a (self-proclaimed) ethnographic approach, but overall, they do not always pay extensive attention to the mundane, daily experiences of the co-workers (though there are some exalting exceptions, e.g. De Vaujany & Aroles, 2018). This is what this dissertation will do, and where Soja’s (1996) notion of the Thirdspace is helpful.

The Thirdspace combines both the Firstspace and Secondspace and refers to the *lived* point of view. This is the space of representation, the space of inhabitants and users. Or, in his own words, “*a fully lived space, a simultaneously real-and-imagined, actual-and-virtual locus of structured individuality and collective experience and agency*” (Soja, 1996, p. 11). For co-working spaces this can refer to, for example, moving beyond the spatial, measurable settings of the workplace on the one hand, and the way it is planned and promoted on the other. This invites further exploring of the lived experiences of workplaces’ users. In order to do this, Soja proposes another trialectical approach, incorporating the spatial, historical and social perspective.

In this dissertation, I follow this call for a trialectic approach informed by historical, social and spatial lenses by seeing co-working and collective workplaces in their historical, spatial setting (i.e. their buildings’ histories and urban contexts – Chapter 6 and 7) and the effects on the social practices. But, I also will

look at social interactions as spatially afforded and historically determined (i.e. the constitution and evolution of social interactions in spatially confined settings – Chapter 4 and 5). Yet, prior to commencing with these empirical studies, I will first provide some further information on the research setting, data collection and methods employed.

DATA AND METHODS

This section describes the data collected and methods employed in this dissertation. It starts with a brief discussion of the research setting and the ten cases (creative workplaces) covered by this research. In this, I will also elaborate on the specificities of the Dutch case, and explain how this relates to international developments. Second, I will share some considerations about the units of analysis and account for the terminology used and selection criteria employed. Finally, some details regarding data-collection and analysis will be addressed, including the research aims, the steps taken in the qualitative studies (ethnographic and in-depth interviews) and quantitative study, and some notes about coding and analysis. This section ends with some considerations on dealing with self-reported data.

Research setting

Cases and research project

Since the late twentieth century, the cultural and creative industries have become increasingly important in especially Europe and North America. From the 1990s, beginning in England, old, often industrial buildings were transformed into workplaces for creative firms. This trend soon spilled over to other countries, including the Netherlands. Here, either bottom-up initiatives emerged in former squat buildings, or more top-down structures were designed by e.g. housing associations looking for solutions for the abandoned industrial districts or investment companies jumping on the trendy creative clustering bandwagon.

This research is part of the *Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries* (CICI) project, in which ten of such spaces in The Netherlands are studied with the aim of understanding the processes of innovation in such locations. The CICI project builds on a unique collaboration with the Dutch Creative Residencies (DCR) Network, the umbrella organisation of creative clusters, creative hubs or co-working spaces in the Netherlands. Ten DCR affiliated locations have agreed to participate in this study, which was approximately one-third of all affiliated residencies at the time of the start of the project (see Table 2).

As indicated in Table 2, 24 collective workplaces exist in different shapes and forms and are growing increasingly diverse (Schmidt et al., 2014). In the literature, several types of offices have been distinguished. I make a distinction between four of these forms that are most relevant for this dissertation, ranging from least to most ‘curated’: 1] regular business centres: workplaces without any facilities or services. 2] Serviced offices: offering office infrastructures for members, but also front-office support. 3] Co-working spaces: in which desks can be rented, often also offer meeting rooms and which are mostly community-oriented. And 4] Incubators and accelerators: accommodating start-ups and providing advice and mentoring programmes (Fuzi, 2015; Weijs-Perrée, Koevering, Appel-Meulenbroek, & Arentze, 2019).

The participating locations cover the full gamut of collective workplaces, indicating a form of *maximum variation sampling*. First, as Table 2 indicates, some of them are more alike the ideal-typical co-working space (such as Klein Haarlem’s and Creative Factory’s flex rooms), whereas others are closer to serviced offices in the sense that the buildings house SMEs and freelancers in separate rooms or offices, while sharing some (basic) facilities. Second, they range from housing a few dozen creatives to housing a few hundred, with some locations being more or less mono-disciplinary and others hosting a wide range of (creative) businesses. Third, some locations are located on the urban

24 Data for the cities’ inhabitants (May 2019) are derived from <https://open-data.cbs.nl/statline/#/CBS/nl/dataset/37230ned/table?dl=22690>

Table 2: Participating locations

Name	Location	Inhabitants city	Type of office	Type of firms	Tenants (2014)	Interviews	Survey
<i>Belcanto</i>	Haarlem	161.975	Business centre	Diverse (also 'non-creative')	89	2	13
<i>BINK36</i>	Den Haag	540.582	Serviced office	Diverse (also 'non-creative')	301	11	50
<i>Creative Factory</i>	Rotterdam	647.646	Serviced office/ co-working space	Diverse (mostly creative)	36	3	7
<i>Dutch Game Garden</i>	Utrecht	354.942	Serviced office/ incubator	Gaming oriented	42	4	11
<i>De Gruyter Fabriek</i>	's Hertogenbosch	154.379	Serviced office	Diverse (mostly creative)	67	6	28
<i>Hazemeijer Hengelo</i>	Hengelo	80.736	Serviced office	Diverse (also 'non-creative')	39	0	9
<i>Honigfabriek</i>	Koog a/d Zaan	156.280 (Zaanstad)	Business centre	Diverse (also 'non-creative')	24	0	12
<i>Klein Haarlem</i>	Haarlem	161.975	Serviced office/ co-working space	Diverse (mostly creative)	89	5	16
<i>Strijp-S (Apparatenfabriek and Klokggebouw)</i>	Eindhoven	232.520	Serviced office/ co-working space	Diverse (mostly creative)	189	7	36
<i>De Vasim</i>	Nijmegen	176.884	Serviced office	Diverse (mostly creative), strong focus on festivals	40	8	0
Total					916	46	182

fringe of a large city, with others being more in the periphery of the Netherlands, outside of the creative centres. Finally, a number of cases are or have been managed by a housing association or investment company (e.g. BINK36, Strijp-S and De Gruyter Fabriek), whereas others are more self-organised, former squat organisation (e.g. De Vasim). This is relevant, because geographic location, size, diversity and organisational structure may influence the potential networks, community development and symbolic value of the workplace.

Nevertheless, the aims and practices within these small-scale clusters are surprisingly similar: all house primarily freelancers and SMEs in the creative sector, and all of them are located within either industrial heritage (e.g. Strijp-S, Creative Factory, Honig Fabriek, Hazemeijer Hengelo) or depreciated office buildings (e.g. Belcanto, Dutch Game Garden). Their geographical locations within the urban structure are also quite similar: all but one (Dutch Game Garden) have found their place on the urban fringe, just outside the city centre, often in a relatively neglected area. Finally, all locations aim to increase synergy between their users by, for example, organising events, and all also consciously work on developing their identity and reputation – though differing in effort, scale and frequency. In conclusion, although this dissertation takes the perspective of the creative worker rather than the workplace in the sense that doing a comparative case study is not one of the main aims of this study, the diverse selection of cases provides interesting in-depth information about practices and processes within different settings, while still being sufficiently alike to allow comparisons between different forms of work organisation.

The Netherlands in international perspective

Cases like the ten workplaces included in this dissertation are not particular to the Netherlands. One can find such spaces throughout – but not limited to – the western world. Studies of for example Andres (2011) on *La Friche* in Marseille, Battaglia and Tremblay (2011) and Tironi (2009) on *Probenou* and the *22@* district in Barcelona, Blagoev et al. (2019) on *betahaus*

in Berlin, Cohendet et al. (2011) on the *Quartier de l'Innovation* in Montreal and again @22 in Barcelona, Kagan, Kirchberg, and Weisenfeld (2019) on the creative networks and settlements in Hannover and Grodach (2011) on several art spaces in the Dallas–Fort Worth region have demonstrated the many ways in which creative workers have organised themselves by co-locating. Remarkably, many of the observed processes seemed to be very similar (e.g. in social networks, interactions, the origin and developments and the interference of municipal actors).

An important driver behind this isomorphism (cf. DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) can be found in the evangelism of the global-urban creative class and ‘creative cities phenomenon’, most prominently propagated by the academic-consultant Richard Florida, who counselled numerous cities throughout the western world and beyond in the early 2000s on their branding efforts – including Amsterdam in 2003 (Peck, 2012) and Rotterdam in 2005 (Lavanga, 2006). As such, in many European cities, including Berlin, Marseille and Lausanne, local authorities have invested in creative workplaces to encourage cultural production and promote a city’s pursued brand or image (Gainza, 2018; see also e.g. Fiorentino, 2018 on public investments in creative workplaces in Rome).

In a similar vein, the urban developments discussed in the previous section, in which post-industrial areas were used and adapted by artists and transformed into creative shared workplaces, are richly described in the Anglo-Saxon literature (Banks et al., 2000; Zukin, 1982) as well as elsewhere in Europe (Gainza, 2018; Andres & Golubchikov, 2016). Merkel’s (2015) and Cohendet, Grandadam & Simon’s (2011) international comparative studies too show many similarities between co-working spaces and collective workplaces around the western world (and perhaps beyond) – again indicating isomorphism in co-working practices. In fact, De Vaujany, Dandoy, Grandazzi and Faure (2019) – who embarked on co-working tours in 13 countries – point out that international co-working spaces are strikingly similar. As one of the authors autoethnographically describes:

“This makes me realize, again, how global our world has become. People share the same information, the same training (e.g. standardized MBA programs), the same providers and partly the same problems (housing costs in big cities, economic competition, the need for more sustainable development, etc.). The same buzzwords are used in Paris and in London. However, despite a real advantage of appearing global and familiar, these spaces also embody a feeling of loss: a loss of identity, a loss of the pleasure of travelling around the world in search of new cultures/routines/habits, a loss of disorientation” (p. 9).

The Netherlands shows quite similar developments – perhaps even stronger than elsewhere, with nearly all mid-sized to larger cities housing at least one of such converted, post-industrial ‘creative clusters’ (Mommaas, 2004). Nevertheless, the Dutch context is also idiosyncratic, differing from most other countries in two important ways. First, the Netherlands is characterised by a strong involvement of (semi-)public institutions in the transformation of industrial buildings to post-industrial shared workplaces. The public housing sector, different from social housing associations elsewhere in the world, has been of great influence. This due to their powerful position in society and in urban planning, and especially their role beyond providing a segment for the lower income housing (Van Kempen & Priemus, 2002). In two of this dissertation’s cases, BINK36 and Strijp-S, a housing association (respectively Vestia and Trudo) was explicitly involved in the transformation and management of the locations, and in at least three others (Creative Factory, Klein Haarlem and Belcanto) a housing association played a determining role either through (partial) ownership or through substantial investments.

Second, the involvement of – and collaboration with – municipal policies has in the Netherlands always been strong, most famously represented by *Bureau Broedplaatsen* department in Amsterdam²⁵ (Cnossen, 2018; Peck, 2012; Plevoets & Sowińska-Heim, 2018), but to a lesser extent also visible elsewhere in the Netherlands.²⁶ For example, De Gruyter Fabriek has received significant investments from as well as involvement by the *Bosche Investerings Maatschappij* (which is strongly tied to and partially funded by the municipality of Den Bosch) and the (temporary) ownership of the Creative Factory by the municipality of Rotterdam. This involvement of (semi-)public institutions obviously has strong implications for the development of such workplaces. First, this leads to many locations having a rather ‘top-down’ origin, and many of them are still governed in such a way (with a manager deciding much of the internal policies, contrary to e.g. the idea of alternative organisation in heterotopic workplaces (Vidaillet & Bousalham, 2018)). Second, this also allows many of such workplaces to have a non-profit financial structure, which enables them to keep the rental fees relatively low and therefore makes these locations available to a relatively broad range of (creative) workers.

Units of analysis: workers, entrepreneurs, individuals

Nevertheless, the goal of this dissertation is *not* to compare and contrast ten different collective workplaces in the Netherlands. Instead, it concentrates on the individual working in the creative industries. It aims to capture the ways in which co-location influences the perceptions and practices of creative workers – thus it sets out to focus particularly on the relationship between the micro and the meso.²⁷ This means that I am first and fore-

25 Bureau Broedplaatsen is an Amsterdam municipal department in charge of the policy and budget transforming empty property into so called Art Factories (Broedplaatsen in Dutch). These locations, usually empty office buildings or warehouses, provide affordable (below market price) workplaces for Amsterdam creative workers.

26 Though one of the cases – de Honig Fabriek – in this dissertation was (partly) funded by this scheme.

27 As mentioned earlier in this dissertation, I see this creative worker as the micro-level, with the selected cases (places) functioning as meso-, and the larger social and urban developments as the macro-level.

most interested in their experience as individuals (yet working in a social, potentially collaborative setting) and start from the perspective of the creative worker. Obviously, though, this raises another question: who may call him-/herself a creative worker? I will answer this question in three steps. First, by placing creative work in the context of the Dutch creative industries. Second, by distinguishing different ways in which individuals working in the creative industries are addressed (most prominently creative workers and creative entrepreneurs), and third, by presenting my own answer or solution to this question.

In the Netherlands, the creative industries are well represented in the overall economy. In 2015, almost one in nine businesses fits within the category of the creative industries (Koops & Rutten, 2017). And quite similar to much of the western world, this group of creative workers has been increasing over the last decades. Growing even faster than the national average job growth, the creative industries in the Netherlands have proven to be relatively resistant to the financial crisis of the mid 2000s. Again, similar to the developments outlined in the previous section, most of this job growth occurred in the category of freelance work – with larger companies decreasing rather than growing (Koops & Rutten, 2017). Yet, how should we address and delineate this group of individuals working in the creative industries? The academic literature in this field presents two broad approaches here, that of creative entrepreneurship, and that of creative work.²⁸

The perspective of creative or cultural entrepreneurship is prevalent in research within or more closely linked to the field of economics and management. With a majority of the businesses in the creative industries being self-employed or SMEs (Stam, Jong, & Marlet, 2008), the ties between both creative work and entrepreneurship, historically conceived as individuals

28 Also acknowledging yet leaving aside the many other labels, such as culturepreneurs (Lange, 2006, 2009), makers (Schmidt, 2019) or hackers (Rosner & Fox, 2016). The creative class (Florida, 2002) too has been an influential angle, especially in the early 2000s, yet considering that it would encompass close to half of the Dutch workforce, it would not be very helpful in this regard (Stam, Jong, & Marlet, 2008).

who carry out new combinations of means of production and innovative endeavours (Schumpeter, 1934), have been intuitively strong. Boix-Domenech, Lazzaretti and Sanchez-Serra (2018) list a number of mechanisms explaining this connection, among others the co-occurrence of creativity and entrepreneurship in the creative workforce, the assumption that creative workers are relatively more entrepreneurial and more likely to start new firms, and Florida's (2002) thesis that creatives tend to locate in places offering fertile grounds for entrepreneurship (i.e. cities). Creative entrepreneurship too, often defined as "*the creation or identification of an opportunity to provide a cultural product, service or experience, and of bringing together the resources to exploit this as an enterprise*" (Rae, 2005, p. 186), however, raises another question: when does a – perhaps reluctant (cf. Boyle, 1994) – freelance worker become an entrepreneur? Even successful 'entrepreneurs' in the creative industries would not necessarily consider themselves as such, especially considering that they tend to be more often motivated by creative freedom and self-expression than entrepreneurial pursuits (Rae, 2004).

Another perspective uses the – more neutral – term of 'creative worker'. This term, which I have been using most regularly throughout this dissertation, finds much of its heritage in the 'critical labour studies' outlined in the preceding section. Especially in the United Kingdom, this way of addressing those working in the creative industries (quite literally!) has been prominent (see e.g. Conor et al., 2015; Garnham, 2005; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2008, 2010; e.g. Pratt, 2011; Throsby, 2001a).²⁹ However, this does raise the question of when work becomes creative. Markusen, Wassall, DeNatale and Cohen (2008) and Potts, Cunningham, Hartley & Ormerod (2008) distinguished those working in the creative industries (but again: what are the creative industries?) and those *doing* cultural or creative work and therefore have a creative occupation – not necessarily within the creative industries (but when is such an occupation creative?).

²⁹ This school of research particularly views creative work in the light of twenty-first century capitalist forms of production, especially the neoliberalist political order impelling the precarious labour conditions outlined in the preceding section (De Peuter, 2014).

Nevertheless, despite their different histories and connotations, many authors seem to use both creative entrepreneurs and creative workers interchangeably (e.g. Eikhof & Haunschild, 2006; Christopherson, 2008; Hracs & Leslie, 2014; Smit, 2011). Though there are unmistakable overlaps between the two terms – and I do not mean to argue that they cannot be used interchangeably – the reluctance of many respondents in the qualitative study to identify as an entrepreneur³⁰ induced my decision to opt for the notion of creative work rather than creative entrepreneurship in this dissertation. Still, this does not present a solution to the challenge of delineating the population. What makes an individual identify as a creative worker? Is it confined to work within the borders of what we call the creative industries (and whose definition do we follow here?), or should one aim to include those doing ‘creative’ work outside of those sectors (but what makes work creative?). For this dissertation, I have opted to steer away from these considerations by taking a simpler strategy: self-identification. Considering I am interested in the experiences of the individuals working in co-located settings in buildings earmarked as *creative* clusters (or hubs, collective workplaces, etc.), the (individual’s) decision to locate in such a setting can be considered a proof of having at least some affinity with the creative industries.

Data-collection and analysis

Research aims

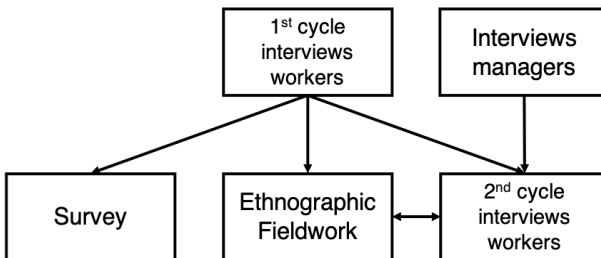
This dissertation relies on a mixed-methods and constructivist grounded theory-informed, bottom-up approach (Charmaz, 2006; see also Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This entails that it aims to derive the analytic categories not from preconceived concepts or hypotheses, but rather from the data (Charmaz, 2001) – though acknowledging that having an empty mind, not informed by any existing theories, would be impossible (Charmaz, 2006). Such a ‘bottom-up’ approach indicates that, contrary to many comparative studies in this field, the starting point is not

30 Though this beyond the scope of this dissertation, there seems to be an internalised conflict between economic and artistic logics at stake here (cf. Caves, 2000; Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007).

the outcome in terms of entrepreneurial or development, products or economic growth, but rather the processes that occur before these results come about. Measuring innovation is therefore not, and never has been one of the goals of this dissertation. Instead, the focus lies on the creative workers' practices and experiences, and their choices (and legitimations thereof) for specific locations.

To do this, I have employed various research methods, mostly qualitative, but also quantitative (as I will describe in the following paragraphs – see also Figure 1). The catalysing question here was what innovation actually *is* in the creative industries. As described earlier, the answer to this question is more strongly imbued with assumptions than with empirical research. Therefore, the overarching aim is to understand (*verstehen*) the experiences of co-located creative workers, and to situate this in the wider (temporal and specifically spatial) macro-level fabric of the social, urban and to a lesser extent also policy and managerial contexts. Following the iterative roadmap prescribed by the grounded theory approach, I draw upon several 'waves' in the research process, starting with first cycle of short pilot interviews with creative workers and workplace managers. These served to inform 1] a second cycle of 43 in-depth qualitative interviews with co-located creatives, as well as a number of (follow-up) interviews with managers, 2] ethnographic fieldwork primarily confined to one particular (co)workplace and 3] a survey (n=182) amongst the same population of creative workers.

Figure 1: Research design



First cycle of qualitative research

In the first months of 2014³¹, all (co)workplaces included in the case selection were visited. During these visits, which usually took between a half and full day, the managers as well as a number of creative workers were interviewed. These first interviews – both for the managers and the workers – were open interviews: explorative and broad conversations in which the managers and creative workers were asked to reflect upon their workplace. In total, ten managers (see Appendix B), and twenty creative workers were interviewed. The former taking up to three hours, while the latter were often quick conversations lasting approximately ten to thirty minutes. The sampling method in this cycle consisted primarily of *convenience sampling*, with the respondents either being invited by the *gatekeepers*, the managers, or by unplanned encounters in the corridors, lunchrooms, at coffee machines, etc. The data of this first wave of interviews consisted of transcriptions or elaboration of jottings (when the interviews took place ‘on-the-go’) of the interviews, as well as field note reports of every visit to a location based on on-location jottings.

Second cycle of qualitative research

The second cycle of interviews consisted of in-depth interviews with creative workers in order to gain a more thorough understanding of the experiences of the workers and the processes taking place in their shared workplaces. In total, 43 in-depth interviews have been conducted (see Appendix A). Two interviews were double or triple interviews, eventually resulting in a sample of 46 respondents. Most of the respondents have been contacted through email lists distributed by the locations’ managers, though a number have been retrieved by *snowball sampling* and *convenience sampling* (by encountering creatives in lunch rooms, in the elevator or in corridors).

Contrary to the first cycle open interviews, these interviews were semi-structured, guided by a topic list (see Appendix C)

31 With the exception of De Vasim and De Honig Fabriek, where the pilot interviews took place respectively in December 2013 and October 2014.

covering a variety of topics regarding innovation, their work practices as well as their understanding of co-working. This topic list was mainly built on the concepts derived from the open interviews (without wanting to pretend that I am uninformed by theory (cf. Charmaz, 2006)). Rather than just reporting factual information (and thus contrary to e.g. expert interviews), they were aimed at capturing the respondents' experiences, explored how they justified their choices and perceptions, and discussed how they related to their (built or social) environment. Due to the iterative, grounded theory inspired approach, it was subject to a continuous process of adjustment. However, generally, the changes between the first and final version have been minor and primarily concerned the phrasing of the questions.

The in-depth interviews took place between September 2014 and October 2015. Out of the 46 respondents, 17 identified as female, and 29 as male. Their ages ranged across the full scope of the labour force, with the youngest being recent graduates in their early 20s, and the oldest nearing retirement age. The respondents worked in one or several of the DCMS sub-sectors of the creative industries, ensuring a *maximum variation sample*. Seven worked in advertising, one in architecture, six in arts and antiques, three in crafts, seven in design, three in designer fashion, six in digital- and entertainment-media, four in film, video, photography and seven in music, performing and visual arts and two in software and electronic publishing. All of the respondents were either self-employed or were working in (usually as the founder or 'director') micro-enterprises. Though I have not explicitly inquired on the respondents' level of education, many referred to their educational backgrounds, which were, in many cases, creativity oriented (design academy, game academy, fine arts, music education, film academy) and higher education ('HBO' or 'WO').

All interviews were conducted face-to-face, usually in the respondents' workplace (though occasionally in a lunchroom on the location or 'on the go', while walking around). On average, the recorded length was 56 minutes (ranging from 30 to 97 minutes), however, most interviews in practice took much

longer, with many respondents taking a long time – sometimes an hour or more – to show me around their workplace while telling about their work.

Ethnographic fieldwork

I have aimed to supplement the discursive elements (from the interviews) by immersing myself in the practices of creative work in action (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011) by means of one month of fieldwork in one particular case, as well as roughly 20 days of fieldwork in the other locations' public sphere or third places. As described in Chapter 5, with approximately 43 days, the ethnographic fieldwork was not substantial enough to count as 'thick description' (Geertz, 1973), yet, it was approached as a means to triangulate findings from the in-depth interviews. During the fieldwork, I have always been overt in my position, introducing myself to participants during visits and presenting myself on the (more or less mandatory) Facebook group and during introductory talks. Fieldnotes mostly written contemporaneously (keeping a notepad open and making jottings and notes throughout the day) and after visits, inscribing the notes right after leaving the fieldwork every day. Considering that continuously typing and writing is commonplace in co-working spaces, jotting notes has been relatively non-intrusive (Emerson et al., 2011).

Most attention has been paid to how people interacted, not only verbally but also by observing their non-verbal communication (strongly influenced by the work of Goffman, 1959, 1967). I also paid particular attention to the affordances of space in terms of interactions: how and whether spatial characteristics stimulated or hampered such social interactions. As periods of interactions were often followed by longer periods of non-interaction, there often was ample time to transform the jottings to actual fieldnotes.

A sense of 'place'

With the in-depth interviews capturing the *saying*, and the ethnographic component shedding light on the *doing* of individuals confined to a particular space, the influence of these spatial set-

tings themselves – the *situatedness* and material culture – too are a pertinent source of information. The physical layout and spatial arrangements, as well as the usage of physical objects in these environments (O’Toole & Were, 2008), at least partly determines how individuals – creative workers – are using a co-working space. My aim here is to move beyond the mere idea that place “*is simply location. It is where people do things*” (Rodman, 1992, p. 640). In this sense, I follow Massey’s (1994) earlier presented position in that place is imbued with cultural implications and social relations. This ties in well with the idea that individuals can reproduce social structures, but also may transform them (cf. the idea of structuration developed by Giddens, 1984). I consequently view co-working spaces as potentially influencing the behaviour of their users, but users also being able to adapt them to suit their needs, practices and beliefs.

More specifically, this means that I have aimed to observe (both ethnographically as well as in the interviews) how the space has physically afforded (J. J. Gibson, 1979) certain forms of behaviour (and failed to afford others), but also how individuals negotiate, justify, conflict over, adapt, engage with, colonise, claim, transform or in any other way relate to spaces (see e.g. O’Toole & Were, 2008 on the individualisation of workplaces). The same holds for material culture, the objects in certain spaces, with which individuals can engage in several ways (or, on the contrary, decide not to). The interior design thus affords a certain seating arrangement, yet users have the agency to change or adapt this. A shared coffee machine affords certain serendipitous encounters, but users may also refrain from using it and bring one of their own instead. In my research, therefore, I have tried to remain sensitive to how co-working space users are using the space and objects. As described above, my main strategies here have been inquiring about their usage in the in-depth interviews and observing the spatial and material arrangements of the co-working space.

Coding and analysis

Though specific details on analysis can be found in the methods section of each empirical chapter, there are some general considerations on the level of the full dissertation that I would like to point out. First, because nearly all pilot interviews have been conducted 'in situ', they have not been recorded and transcribed. Yet, extensive notes have been taken before, during and after the interviews, leading to a – nevertheless – rich body of text suitable for analysis. All of the in-depth interviews, as well as most (but not all) of the interviews with managers have been recorded and transcribed. All fieldnotes and transcriptions were coded and analysed using Atlas.ti.

As mentioned above, in coding, I took a constructivist grounded theory based approach in the sense that, despite my interest in e.g. the micro-aspects of cluster theory related concepts, I aimed to derive the analytic categories not only from these preconceived concepts, but as much as possible from the data (Charmaz, 2001). In especially the pilot (first cycle) interviews as well as in the interviews with the managers, the coding was primarily what in grounded theory is called 'open coding'. This means that, in these interviews, more or less every piece of text was coded (Friese, 2012) by in vivo, process, and initial coding strategies in order to capture as many ideas as possible. After that, I analysed the fieldnotes and open codes in a few iterative cycles (i.e. making the first move towards axial coding) by employing a combination of techniques: focussing on recurring topics (all chapters), metaphors (Chapter 6), similarities and differences (Chapter 2), theory-related material (Chapter 4), cutting and sorting per topic (the full dissertation on a more macro-level) (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). Three overarching themes stemmed from these pilot interviews: innovation, collaboration and reputation, which were eventually translated to the three major themes of this dissertation.

For the first in-depth (second cycle) interviews with respondents, I repeated this iterative process of open coding a number of times in order to get a better grasp on the specifics within each theme. This, again, indicates that I used in vivo,

process and initial coding strategies. Yet, further in the data-collection, on the macro-level of this dissertation, only the most salient patterns were coded, limiting myself to lumper coding – taking a rather broad-brush approach to capture the most important perspectives on a certain theme – and focussed coding (cf. axial coding) – selecting the most significant and frequent codes to continue specific lines of inquiry. However, an exception here is the more ethnographically oriented chapter (Chapter 5), which was guided more by theoretical concepts derived from the literature on interaction rituals (i.e. R. Collins, 2005; Goffman, 1967), such as *sacred objects*, *arriving and retreating* from a scene and *front- and backstage* settings. Finally, looking at more specific details in order to answer the research questions, a final cycle of selective coding was used (Saldaña, 2012).

Survey

The qualitative material was, for one chapter (Chapter 3), supplemented by a survey covering the same population as the interviews. The goal of this survey was to – for at least one of the studies – explore whether and how certain phenomena observed in the pilot and qualitative studies also held among a larger population. All quantitative data was obtained by the Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries (CICI) Survey Part 2. This survey focussed on, among other items, the valuation of the respondents' location, their creative/innovative identities, place reputation, inspiration and innovation. It was developed based on the in-depth interviews with the places' managers as well as the respondents.

The units of analysis were the creative workers renting spaces in one of the locations covered by this project. A sample of 916 firms located in 9 out of the 10 cases in this research project were sent an invitation to a survey with a cover letter explaining the topic and importance of the research project. In 8 locations, the respondents were notified about the study by the locations' managers, who distributed an email which emphasised their involvement in this research project as well as further instructions guiding the (online) questionnaire. In one

workplace, a research assistant distributed and collected surveys on paper by delivering a mail package which included a paper version of the questionnaire as well an accompanying letter instructing them on anonymity measures. The locations' managers sent follow-up reminders after 2 and 4 weeks. A total of 182 surveys were completed, representing a response rate of 20%. The survey was only available in Dutch.

Dealing with self-reported data

As emphasised before, this dissertation focusses mainly on how creative workers experience the influence of their location, and to a lesser extent on how this affects their perceived innovativeness. At face-value, this could make one inclined to think that this dissertation is problematically based upon self-reported data on innovation. Obviously, self-reported data has a long history of being considered 'incorrect reporting', with studies demonstrating a low correlation between self-reported and observed data (Bernard, Killworth, Kronenfeld, & Sailer, 1984). But is this, in this case, really a problem? I would argue: not necessarily, for several distinct reasons.

First, while acknowledging the difficulties with triangulation, especially when taking a constructivist approach like this dissertation does (Silverman, 2013), the combination of the discursive elements and actions of the respondents, quantitative data, and the insights into the managerial perspectives do provide some opportunities to counter the potential biases that come from self-reported data – perhaps not about innovation, but potentially about collaborative practices, interactions and other actions. By applying the just outlined procedure this dissertation (including pilot interviews, interviews, ethnography/survey), these narratives also build up and grow in their richness.

More specifically, in the analysis, I followed a procedure close to what Moran-Ellis et al. (2006) call 'following a thread', in which multiple methods are used to generate several datasets in the same investigation. Taking, after some exploration, one thread from one data-set that is then followed across the other sets to generate a more multi-faceted picture of the phenome-

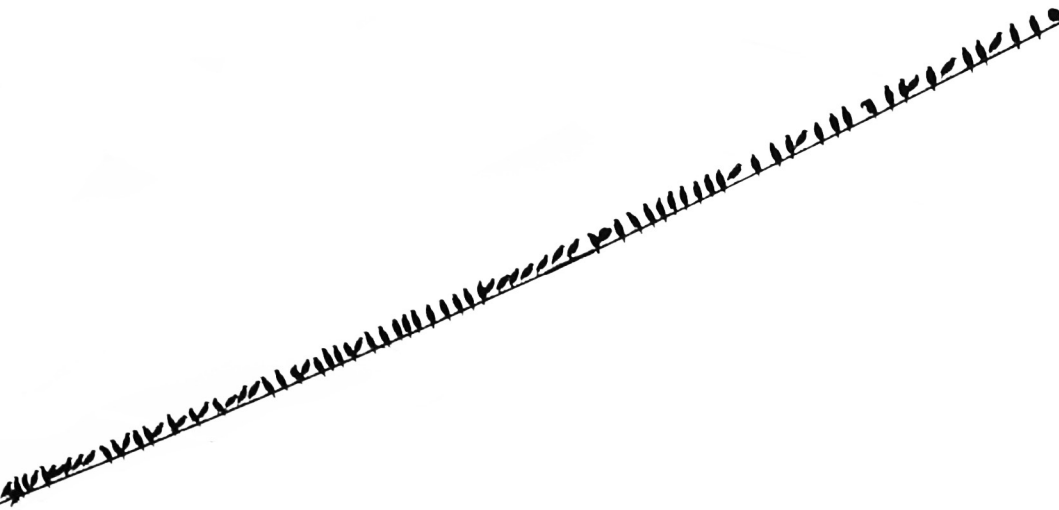
non. In this dissertation, this thread would entail the pilot and in-depth interviews with creative workers in which they actively construct their narrative about innovativeness and co-location (see e.g. Holstein & Gubrium, 2007; Holstein, Gubrium, & Gubrium, 1995), supplemented by fieldnotes (ethnographic and concerning the physical and material settings – informing Chapter 7) and a survey (informing Chapter 3).

Second, as discussed earlier in this introduction, innovation and the creative industries have a problematic relationship, with traditional measurements, conceptualisations and definitions hardly fitting the practices of creative work. So, is it in any case – at all – possible to measure such innovations? This brings me to a follow-up question, taking this criticism in broader terms. Measuring innovation in general is problematic in the first place, with much research taking proxies (e.g. R&D expenditure, patents or ‘new’ products or services) as indicators of innovativeness. Yet, do they really capture what innovation is about? The answer to both questions, in my perspective, would hardly be positive. Of course, this response might not be truly answering the question of self-reported data. Yet, considering that I aspire to capture how the co-located creative workers experience their (social, material and symbolic) environments, and how this, in their own perception, leads to what they themselves consider innovation (cf. the notion of Thirdspace, see Soja, 1996), quantitatively ‘measuring’ innovativeness might not at all be the right step to take here. Much more, I will focus on how innovation is constructed in biographical narratives (Giddens, 1991) in connection to the day-to-day world, the interactions with others, and global and local settings.

Having elaborated upon the methods and the challenges in studying innovation in the creative industries, the next two chapters will dive deeper into this issue of innovation in the creative industries. This will be followed by four other empirical chapters, further exploring two potential sources (or drivers) of innovation: proximity of other creatives and the (symbolic) value of place.

Part I

Innovation in the
creative industries



Chapter 2

“Innovation is a dirty word”

*Contesting innovation in the
creative industries*

INTRODUCTION³²

Innovation is one of the numerous terms in (social) science that are conceptualised in many different traditions of thinking. Yet at the same time, the term has had a profound influence on both policy and production. Innovation is exceptionally hard to quantify in measures and rates, making it a complex concept to work with. This holds for innovation in technological and production processes, but even more so for the creative and cultural industries, which often lack the traditional measures of innovation such as R&D expenditure and patents (Chapaín et al., 2010). Many still view innovation in an atomistic and linear manner, with inventions as inputs and market success as outputs. Additionally, most research on innovation focusses on the science, technology, engineering and mathematics (hereafter STEM) sectors, making the concept not, or only to a limited extent, applicable to other industries, such as the service industries or creative industries (e.g. Jaaniste, 2009).

At the same time, broader social and industrial developments such as the culturalisation of the economy (Scott, 1997; Lash & Urry, 1994) and the growing importance of creativity and the knowledge economy (Leadbeater, 2000) alter the realm of what we see as ‘new’ or ‘innovative’. Together with the seminal works of for example Florida (2002) and Landry (2000), these developments led to the assumption that the creative industries are a key contributor to innovation economies. Ideas, processes, products and talent that are developed by the creative industries drive productivity in- and outside these industries (Cunningham, 2013). Therefore, ever since the creative industries became a fashionable discourse and policy construct in the 1990s, policy documents and grey literature increasingly presented innovation as synonymous to creativity and the creative industries (Oakley, 2009) by, for example, stating that “[k]nowledge and creativity are becoming powerful drivers of economic growth in the contemporary globalizing

32 This chapter is a slightly altered version of Wijngaarden, Y., Hitters, E., & V. Bhansing, P. (2019b). ‘Innovation is a dirty word’: contesting innovation in the creative industries. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 25(3), 392-405.

world" (UNCTAD, 2010, p. 209). These discourses were strongly tied to Throsby's (2001b) concentric circle model in which the creative arts are considered to be generators of ideas developed by other industries, and are, as Oakley (2009) argues, also applied by the general economy. Ultimately, this resulted in a wide variety of policy measures to stimulate the creative economy (e.g. the European Agenda for Culture's Policy Handbook or the Dutch Top Sector of the Creative Industries), without fully understanding how the innovativeness of the creative industries would spill over into the wider economy.

Yet (or furthermore), both in academic as well as in this grey literature, the creative industries are often underrepresented in the sense that innovation in these sectors is difficult to grasp and measure statistically (Miles & Green, 2008; Cunningham, 2008). With these social and policy changes in mind, the call for a new approach to innovation in the creative industries becomes more urgent. As Hutter and Stark (2015) argued:

"[a]s modern society transforms itself into a society of continuous self-change, the scope of innovation widens to all processes that introduce something new. A very broad definition is needed to capture cases as diverse as the shapes of specific synthesizer sounds to new labour market policies, or from a new fashionable style of painting to the invention of a mathematical proof" (p. 1).

We seek to take the first step in developing such a new, broad definition of innovation by focussing on the creative industries. As mentioned above, these industries are, both in research and in policy documents, often heralded as the quintessential innovative industries (Evans, 2009), yet, they are problematic in the assessment of their innovativeness. Despite their heterogeneity, their mode of production differs from most other sectors in the sense that it is characterised by a continuous stream of improvements and changes (Lee & Rodríguez-Pose, 2014a). Every website, sculpture, theatre production and photograph that is not a replication of other works of art receives its value by being something unique and new (Caves, 2000). Arguably, an at-

omistic and linear approach to innovation can therefore not be upheld when discussing the creative industries.

This raises the question of how creative industries innovation may be different from other forms of innovation, such as innovation in the STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) sectors. We seek to refine the conceptualisation of innovation specifically for the creative and cultural industries by building on the findings on 43 in-depth interviews with creative workers about their definitions, experiences and interpretations of innovation in their field of work. Our aim is to contextualise innovation in a way that does justice to the manifold practices of creative industries workers, while revealing its highly social and spatial embeddedness in creative industries production systems.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The conceptualisation of innovation has strong historical roots which provide important insights in the current issues in the usage of the term. Initially, innovation was coined by researchers involved in technology development and economics. The early discussion was heavily influenced by the work of Joseph Schumpeter, who considered the entrepreneur to be the principle player in innovative production. Schumpeter's often cited definition of innovation covers the width innovation still has today: the introduction of a new good, the introduction of a new method of production, the opening of new markets, the conquest of a new source or supply of raw materials or half-manufactured goods, and the implementation of a new form of organisation (Schumpeter, 1934). In his definition, innovation is considered to be a new combination of means of production, distinguishing it from invention, which "*is without importance to economic analysis and mere reproductions of existing business models*" (Schumpeter, 1939, p. 85).

This importance to economic analysis has nowadays become an increasingly difficult aspect, as profit, especially in the

creative industries, is not always the main indicator for success. On the other hand, innovation in Schumpeterian terms does fit the current creative industries: innovation became a term strongly tied to individual entrepreneurship.³³ As individual entrepreneurship in the form of SMEs or freelancers is abundant in the creative industries (Hesmondhalgh, 2012), these industries undeniably fit this aspect of a Schumpeterian approach to innovation.

However, in the years of Schumpeter and the subsequent decades, the most prominent means of production were often focussed on industries other than the creative. The vast majority of research on innovation published in the decades following Schumpeter's definition focused on R&D in sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing and mining. This research was frequently based on the OECD's Frascati (from 1962) and Oslo (from 1992) manuals, which employed a technological product and processes (hereafter TPP) definition of innovation. TPP innovation is defined as: "implemented technologically new products and processes and significant technological improvements in products and processes" (OECD & EUROSTAT, 1997, p. 31).³⁴ Not surprisingly, these TPP approaches to innovations poorly fit other sectors, such as the service or the creative industries (Stoneman, 2009; Eltham, 2013) because their innovations often take a different shape than those in the TPP industries.

As argued above, in early and mid-twentieth century, the creative industries were not often considered to be a relevant area of economic analysis and academic research on innovation. This changed towards the end of the century. Especially over the last two decades, the corpus of academic literature and policy reports discussing this presumed association between the

33 As described in Chapter 1, I take creative entrepreneur and creative worker largely as synonymous.

34 Even though the more recent Oslo Manuals (e.g. the Third Edition) increasingly acknowledge non-technological facets of innovation, it still fails to include many aspects of innovation in the creative industries (Chapain, Cooke, Propriis, MacNeill, & Mateos-Garcia, 2010).

creative industries and innovation has grown tremendously (e.g. Brandellero & Kloosterman, 2010; Desrochers, 2001; Gordon & McCann, 2005b; Grantham & Kaplinsky, 2005; Landry & Bianchini, 2005; Oakley, Sperry, & Pratt, 2008; O'Connor, 2004; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009; Scott, 1999, 2006).

The creative industries, often used interchangeably with the terms cultural industries or cultural economy, are considered those industries that *“have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation”* (Department for Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS], 1998). In the Netherlands, a common definition demarcates the creative industries as those industries producing products and services that are the result of creative labour (Rutten, Muskens, Manshanden, & Koops, 2004). Other definitions highlight the importance of cultural, artistic or entertainment value in products and services (Caves, 2000), the industries that *“deal primarily with the industrial production and circulation of texts”* (Hesmondhalgh, 2012, p. 16) or a group of core creative arts that diffuse outwards to other (creative industries related) industries through concentric circles (Throsby, 2008).

How did a mostly STEM sector oriented concept as innovation become affiliated with the creative industries? In the recent years and along with the rising importance of a cultural economy or even the culturalisation of global capitalism (cf. Scott, 1997), creativity has been increasingly instrumental to economic and employment growth agendas. Especially in knowledge economies, the industries producing non-tangible goods and ideas are considered important foundations of innovation and subsequently economic progress. Therefore, also encouraged by Florida's (2002) work on the creative class, the importance of enhancing creativity and innovation trickled through to many levels of policy and politics.

However, despite this peak of interest in the creative industries and innovation, academic research sparsely studied the specific features of innovation in the creative industries. Moreover, the development of an overarching (i.e. multidisciplinary yet cohesive) conceptualisation of innovation in the creative in-

dustries for the policy field has been hampered by the fact that, throughout Europe, the cultural and creative industries have been coined a key economic sector whose innovative capacities were believed to branch out or spill over to the wider economy (Department for Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS], 1998; UNCTAD, 2008). The enthusiasm for the innovative capacities of the creative industries was mostly based on assertions rather than actual evidence for the link between creativity, culture and innovation (Oakley, 2009). Inevitably, such a normative approach obstructed the development of a more fitting definition of innovation in the creative industries in many policy papers.

Consequently, in the policy field, innovation in the creative industries is mostly considered in its relation to spill-overs to the broader economy (Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009), but how is innovation defined in contemporary academic research on the creative industries?³⁵ In many existing accounts of research on innovation in the creative industries, a TTP like approach to innovation is adopted, using atomised and linear unidirectional depictions of the innovation process (e.g. Godin, 2006), where creativity is generally seen as an external input to 'non-creative' sectors or waning regions and cities. The same holds for other definitions of innovation, for example, the one developed by Gordon and McCann (2005b), who stated that "[i]nnovation involves the successful implementation of a new product, service, or process, which for most activities entails their commercial success" (p. 525), or the definition of Fagerberg, Mowery and Nelson (2005), which can be summarised in carrying out a new idea for a product or process. Both studies argue that innovation is different from the mere inception of an idea or invention, and consider successful implementation a core aspect of innovation. In the creative industries, however, commercial success is not

35 Obviously, the creative industries are a heterogeneous construction; some sectors, such as the arts, have a different view on innovation than for example web design or advertising (Stam et al., 2008). However, in this chapter, research on the creative industries refers to these industries in general. For more in-depth studies regarding innovation in specific creative disciplines, we refer to e.g. Cohendet and Simon (2007), Grantham and Kaplinsky (2005) and Tschang (2007) (see also the overview of Miles & Green, 2008).

always the most prominent objective of production.

In other discourses and as mentioned in the introduction, the creative industries are considered innovative by nature, with creative practitioners continuously producing new products and services. However, in these discourses, innovations take a different form than in the STEM sector innovations, as such innovations often are minor and subtle aesthetic changes in a product's look or design, or its production process (Stoneman, 2009). In either case, the context specific, organisation dependent and institutionalised nature of the underlying processes has remained largely obscured from the analysis.

Even though among others Castañer and Campos (2002), Caves (2000), Miles and Green (2008), Stoneman (2009), Cappetta, Cillo and Ponti (2006), Jaaniste (2009), Bilton (2009, 2015), Lorenzen and Frederiksen (2008) and Gordon and McCann (2005b) proposed one or several conceptualisations and definitions of innovation in the creative industries, they employ a rather diffuse set of concepts. For example, their conceptualisations range from hidden innovation (innovation that is hidden from traditional measures, without a scientific or technological basis or created from novel combinations, or small local innovations taking place 'under the radar' (Miles & Green, 2008)), stylistic innovation (the reassignment of meanings to an existing product or its change in aesthetic characteristics (Cappetta et al., 2006)), soft innovation (innovation in products that are not generally considered functional in nature but are mainly aesthetic (Stoneman, 2009)) to artistic innovation (the introduction of something new in a(n) (organisational) field (Castañer & Campos, 2002)). Even though overlap can be found, each definition highlights a different interpretation of the term.

Besides formulating alternative definitions, some authors explicitly differentiate the innovations in the creative industries from other, often technological innovations. According to Caves (2000), creative industries innovation primarily consists of process innovation, new combinations of existing elements or fringe styles, while 'normal' innovation emerges mainly from purposive and typically costly efforts built on scientific and en-

gineering knowledge. Pratt and Gornostaeva (2009) also address the difference between creative industries and innovation in other sectors: the former is often not a technological big bang, but a more organic and systemic process that is influenced by complex structures in regulation and the market. Another distinction is made between CPP innovation and TPP innovation, with the former considered to be the creative counterpart of the latter. Instead of the STEM sectors and patents, CPP innovation is based on the expressive-reflexive knowledge systems of the humanities and social sciences and copyrighted products. It includes the R&D, application and diffusion of cultural products and the way they are made, delivered and distributed. On the production side, the driving forces behind CPP innovation are often creative inspiration, while on the consumer side, innovation is often driven by developments in consumer tastes (Jaaniste, 2009). Lee and Rodríguez-Pose (2014a) differentiate several forms of innovations: original, fully new innovations versus learned innovations; innovations already existing yet new to the firm.

Nevertheless, while the aforementioned studies address the exceptional nature of creative innovation, Lee and Rodríguez-Pose (2014b) argue that innovation in the creative industries does not take a different form than innovation in other sectors. Their approach to innovation is often reflected in innovation measurement documents. For example, the Community Innovation Survey is one of the measures used to quantify innovation in the creative industries (e.g. Bakhshi & McVittie, 2009). This survey relies heavily on the Oslo Manual, using a broad yet technological view on innovation. This indicates that the STEM oriented approach to innovation in the creative industries is still present, despite the many disputes around the nature of innovations especially within these industries.

In sum, contemporary research offers a wide variety of conceptualisations of innovation in relation to the creative industries. Yet, a coherent conceptualisation of innovation in the field of the creative industries is needed. Instead of taking a theoretical approach, we propose to focus on the experiences of prac-

titioners in the creative industries. By doing this, we aim to provide a definition of innovation that captures the idiosyncrasies of innovation in the creative industries, yet that also does justice to the general tendencies of their field of work. This leads to the following research question: what do creative practitioners experience as innovation in their field of work, and how do they give meaning to this concept? The literature review indicates that innovation takes on many different shapes, dependent on the approach of the author and the industrial sectors. Therefore, a useful line of thought – and one that we propose to follow here – is to adopt a process approach to innovation within a field of innovation and creativity (cf. Bourdieu, 1993; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009). Based on the particularities of the creative industries addressed in the aforementioned research, ‘newness’ in the creative industries often has a different meaning compared to innovation in the STEM sectors. Therefore, we expect that innovation emerges in places by agents in a structural context, embedded in interactive processes of embodied learning and feedback. In order to answer the research question, we have taken a qualitative approach by exploring the meanings, definitions and explanations given to innovation by creative workers in the Netherlands.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

In the pilot interviews with creative workers conducted in the winter of 2013-2014, we found that many respondents do not identify with most common conceptualisations of innovation, as they considered these definitions to be mostly associated with technologically based industries. Therefore, a second cycle of 43 in-depth follow-up interviews has been conducted with creative workers in order to gain a more refined and grounded understanding of the meanings of innovation both to producers and researchers (see Chapter 1).

All interviews were subsequently coded and analysed using Atlas.ti by taking a primarily semantic and inductive thematic

coding approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006). In these coding processes, we have chosen to focus on the definitions given to innovation in general, the definition of innovation in the respondents’ field, their self-evaluation in terms of innovativeness, the context in which innovation occurs and the relationship between specific places and innovation.

RESULTS

Not surprisingly and similar to the plethora of definitions coined by academics and policy makers, the respondents did not articulate one coherent vision on the meaning of innovation. In fact, many respondents struggled to come up with a general definition of innovation in the first place. There often was a noticeable reluctance to reflect on innovation and their own innovativeness.

The reluctance to discuss these topics has two reasons that resonate with the history of the concept of innovation and the creative industries. First, many respondents considered innovation to be a term that is associated with the STEM sectors: sectors that are highly different from the field the respondents are operating in. Evidently, this is strongly tied to the heritage of innovation being historically predominantly used for R&D and patent focused sectors. Second, this indifferent attitude to innovation was partly caused by the aforementioned perceived increasing importance of innovation for the creative industries. Respondents did not associate with it, nor did they feel represented by the often articulated idea of the creative industries as an engine for economic growth and innovation (e.g. Department for Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS], 1998; UNCTAD, 2008). In fact, a few respondents expressed negative thoughts about this creative industries ‘innovativeness imperative’, and considered the term ‘innovation’ to be a platitude, or to be misused or overused for the creative industries.

“I don’t feel myself, I am not feeling like an innovator. I see it more like... I think about something technological or eh, something smart we don’t know yet. Eh, I don’t often have that in my work. I am also not doing very innovative things. But... what I... what I feel about this place [a start-up cooperation] is that it wants to go forward, to break free from the established patterns, the business patterns that exist. So we are all searching, sometimes unconsciously, [...] because we’re self-employed, you want to do things differently. You want to break away from the systems so to say. That’s perhaps not very innovative, but it is progressive, thinking ahead, or... different.” [Claire, Design]

“I have not been thinking about [innovation]. I don’t have an answer [to the question what is innovation]. [...] I don’t consider myself innovative. I am creative.” [Leo, Film, video and photography]

“I start to see innovation a bit as a dirty word, because it is overused. [...]. It starts to lose its meaning. [...] Often I lose my interest in presentations when it says: it is about innovations of [makes snoring sounds and pretends to fall asleep].” [Tom, Design]

However, when the creative workers were asked to give a definition of innovation in relation to their own experiences, many respondents did develop a definition that covered either innovation in general, or innovation in their fields. This indicated that innovation has indeed become an empty term for many creative workers, but as soon as it connected to specific contents or their own experiences, it immediately became meaningful. From our analysis, three distinct patterns of innovation definitions arose, reflecting the full gamut of existing definitions: innovation as something completely new, innovation with a social impact and innovation as a continuous process of renewal.

The complete newness approach

The first of these definitions highly resembles the atomistic, linear interpretation often voiced in the context of the STEM sectors and TPP innovation: the form of innovation mostly to be found in the OECD (e.g. 1962, 1992; 1997) manuals. Innovation here is presented as something that is *completely new*; an object, process or service that was not yet in existence before. The newness here could be found in technology, techniques, new materials and new forms of software or computer programmes (see also the definition Bakhshi & Throsby, 2012). Noticeably, these accounts of innovation require radical change and a strong creative imagination: being able to see things that are not yet existing. Most respondents formulating this *complete newness* approach to innovation, however, rarely felt like they themselves were able to do this. Such a form of innovation was, for most, reserved for the STEM sectors.

“Innovation is when you create something that is not yet existing.”

[Kim, Film, video and photography]

“I think innovation is something [...] that does not exist yet. And I find that difficult, because actually everything exists. And then you quickly move towards technological progress.” [Claire, Design]

Nevertheless, even though the majority of creative workers argued that this *complete newness* innovation is rare in the creative industries, some referred to a number of other aspects that were frequently associated with innovation in the creative industries. Firstly, innovativeness is considered to be strongly related to, or even inseparable from, technology and technological development. A new camera that provides new possibilities, faster computers giving more opportunities to create state-of-the-art designs and new chemical techniques that enable novel forms of ceramic glazing are all examples of externally developed technologies that influence the potential for creative practitioners. Instead of seeing technological product and process innovation

(TPP) and cultural product and process innovation (CPP) as two mutually exclusive aspects of innovation, this implies an alternative concentric circle model, with technology diffusing to the outer circles containing the creative industries.

The examples are not limited to the respondents' disciplinary field and experiences of their own work. A number of respondents referred to developments and objects outside their daily lives, and even outside Schumpeter's broad scheme of forms of innovation; travelling to Mars being probably the most imaginative example. A noteworthy pattern here is the recurrent reference to tangible 'innovative' objects, in particular the 3D printer, which was often considered the epitome of innovation. In our analysis, we found numerous references to this object, as well as ways in which it could be used to transform their creative work practices and its astonishing influence on society. This – again – is an example of a technological breakthrough that influences the work and experiences of creative workers.

“My first association of innovation without thinking it through is eb, a 3D printer or Tesla.” [Abel, Advertising]

“A 3D eb, 3D metal printer, that's what I think is an innovation. What it does, it touches upon people, upon society. It contributes to society.” [Bjorn, Advertising]

The social impact of innovation

As described in the opening sentence of this innovation, there is a strong alleged connection between innovation and solving societal problems. In the interviews, this *innovation as having a social impact* is also a recurrent theme, and is the second definition of innovation that emerged from the analysis. Here, what makes an innovation an innovation is not its newness, but its social impact or relevance. Making the world a better place is a characterising element for defining innovation for these creative workers. This could be related to technological developments such as the aforementioned 3D printer, or development in business models and apps like taxi service Uber, for example, by being able

to make prosthetics and making taxi services more affordable. Both these examples are derived, not surprisingly, from sectors outside the creative industries. This broad definition is related to the concept of social innovation that is also mentioned by Jaaniste (2009).

Even though many creative workers did not participate in specific social innovation activities, in some cases their definition did refer to more creative developments. A creative development, for example designing a chair, was rendered meaningless by one of the respondents if no one wants to use it. Community art projects are, for many respondents, also an important aspect of their work. Several declared to have strong ties with local politics and social movements. For them, the aim was not so much to invent new products, but mostly to make *"nice things for the people"* [Francis, Fine Arts]. Hence, innovation does not have to be a grand revolution: it also appears on a smaller level. The characterising feature is not its successful implementation in terms of market success (such as Gordon and McCann's (2005b) definition) indicates, but the social impact.

"Personally I see [innovation] as a development, so people that develop something, innovate something, innovation that matters. So eh, a technological or creative development [...], a development that improves people and society." [Bjorn, Advertising]

"If you develop a technology, it wouldn't solve anything. If it doesn't realise someone's dream, yes, it's not innovative. And technology is perhaps easy to make tangible, but social innovation [...], you need to look very carefully because otherwise you wouldn't recognise it" [Eric, Software and electronic publishing].

Innovation as a continuous process of renewal

The third and final definition of innovation that was voiced by the creative workers is, in most cases, closest to their personal experiences. Even though many respondents referred to *complete newness* and *innovation with social impact*, few were involved in

major breakthroughs such as 3D printing and articulated having explicit social commitments themselves – they considered themselves first and foremost creative workers, and not predominantly the saviour of the world (although some did argue that they wanted “*to make the world a better place*” [Marcus, Advertising]). Therefore, a number of creative workers developed a definition of innovation that is similar to what Lorenzen and Frederiksen (2008) consider a constant form of product innovation resulting in continuous streams of small adjustments.

Indeed, the respondents argued that they rarely develop fully new products; on the contrary, most products are a variation on a pre-existing design, suggesting a very soft innovation (Stoneman, 2009) like approach. This can be either a combination of old and new, such as a garment with new technological functions or an existing website design with a new plugin, or even old with old, such as the development of new innovative artwork collections or combining one’s existing work with someone else’s in order to develop an unexpected outcome. Improving efficiency of existing processes is also an aspect of innovation that was mentioned repeatedly. In either case, the linear, ‘great breakthrough’ idea of innovation was dismissed for a notion that focussed much more on small steps and unexpected creative outcomes – see also formal innovation (G. Bianchi & Bartolotti, 1996) and stylistic innovation (Cappetta et al., 2006) here. In sum, innovation, in this third form, is not something *new*; it is a process of *continuous renewal*.

“Innovation is renewal. And renewal does not have to be a new product. [...]. Giving something a new function. Finding cooperation with a business that is not obvious.” [Jessica, Arts and antiques]

“Renewing, innovating [is] finding an adjustment that gives something just a different value than what it had before.” [Brenda, Arts and antiques]

“A lot of entrepreneurs here that are creative, they deal with innovation differently than companies like Philips. [...]. I think [what they do] is also innovation, but more indirectly. You can develop a material, and with this material, I can make something. That is indirect innovation.” [Andreas, Design]

With regard to innovation as renewal, it is important to note that for many creative workers, making something new or changing an object or process is not an ultimate goal or their incentive to work. On the contrary, many argued that without continuously developing new products and services, an artist cannot survive. Creative workers, thus, are repeatedly on the outlook for renewal and innovation. However, some respondents stress that these improvements can hardly be measured, and the degree of innovation is only relative to what is perceived as ‘new’ or ‘better’ within their own economic network. In this field, market success may be seen as an objective indicator; entrepreneurial (peer) recognition as a more subjective indicator of innovation. Such indicators tie in rather neatly with a Bourdieusian (1993) framework of analysis and fit the definition of innovation in the creative industries as described by Castañer and Campos (2002): innovation in the creative industries is characterised by innovativeness within a specific field.

“[Talking about an existing project] I find it very interesting, is it innovative? I find it a good move, but is it really innovative? In this sector it may be innovative. I don’t think many businesses this size made this step.” [Marcus, Advertising]

“The others are also on the move, and if you’re not renewing or doing innovative work, and you’re doing the same for too long, then eventually the competition will roll past you, [...] because you’ve become out-dated. [...] Especially as an artist.” [Sebastian, Music and visual and performing arts]

This confirms the distinction of several forms of innovation outlined by Lee and Rodríguez-Pose (2014a), who discerned

original or new to the market innovation and learnt or new to the firm innovation in new services and products or new processes. The latter is much more common in the creative industries, and is often a result of the recombination of existing knowledge, ideas or technologies being already applied elsewhere. Stam, De Jong and Marlet (2008) also found that in the Netherlands, creative firms excel most prominently in new product and service innovation, whereas the introduction of goods and services to the industry is more on par with other industries.

In conclusion, the first two definitions, *innovation as complete newness* and to a lesser extent *the social impact of innovation*, indicate that there are some differences between innovation in the creative industries and innovations in other industries. The innovations elsewhere are often regarded as grand technological breakthrough and often as a development that could change society for the better. Even though a number of respondents argued that they were involved in (spin-off) social innovation or fully new innovative products or services, most respondents claimed that their work does not have such a character or impact (even though many were involved in a form of community arts of engagement).

If it is not the STEM sector or TPP oriented definition that fits their work best, how should we address innovation in the creative industries? Arguably, the third definition provides an answer to this question. Innovations, according to many respondents, always occur in a context. For example, applying a newly learned technique for developing photographic films (see also the learned innovation definition of Lee & Rodríguez-Pose, 2014a), or combining several existing forms of art. The explanation for this distinction can be found in the difference between the goal and the means. In many creative industries, innovation is not regarded a goal as, for example, patents are for the STEM sectors. On the contrary, to do their everyday work, creative workers have no other options than creating a new or adjusted product or service. This leads to a significantly different and broader approach to innovation.

CONCLUSION

In our research, we have sought to refine the conceptualisation of innovation specifically for the creative and cultural industries by exploring the definitions, experiences and interpretations of innovation of creative practitioners in- and outside their respective field of work. Our findings are based on an analysis of 43 in-depth interviews. We aimed to do justice to the many aspects of the creative industries by taking these particular practitioners' views as a starting point for our analysis.

Our first observation is that many respondents at first felt little affinity with the concept of innovation in their own fields of work, despite (or perhaps because of) the assumed relationship between innovation and the creative industries. The innovation and creative industries discourse that emerged from the 1990s especially in, but not limited to, the field of cultural policies, contributed to the developments of many cultural and creative industries through (increased) subsidies and other forms of investments (Oakley, 2009; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009). However, the results of this study indicate that such an ‘innovation and the creative industries’ hype also has detrimental effects in the sense that it could alienate the actual creative workers from these policies. Indeed, some of the respondents did not identify with this innovation imperative and they voiced two distinct arguments for this. On the one hand, they felt ‘tired’ of the ubiquitous discourse of the innovative capacities of the creative industries, and on the other hand, many argued that the concept did not fit their practices as creative workers.

This is strongly related to another significant finding of our research: the overall conception of innovation in a general sense among practitioners in the creative industries is still a fairly traditional notion of technological improvement and the adaption of ground breaking technologies for manufacturing new products. A good illustration of this definition is the example of the 3D printing often voiced by the respondents as the epitome of innovation. At the same time, many argued that such technological progress alone cannot fulfil the conditions for innovation;

innovation, according to some respondents, has to have a social impact as well. The most prominent examples tell us that the common assumption of invented technologies as being external to the creative field still is widely supported, even among creative workers. However, once the creative practitioners hypothesised about their own work, and considered, for instance, how such an invention can be used as input in the creative process in order to generate innovative output, several respondents synthesised existing common notions of innovation with their own working practices and developed a more nuanced definition of innovation for the creative industries.

This synthesis was voiced by a significant part of our respondents who dismissed linear models of innovation when talking about their own practices, and focussed much more on the exceptional nature of their specific creative industry. Here, the emphasis in their definitions of innovation within their own field was not on ground breaking technologies, but rather on incremental improvements and experiments (which Caves, 2000 sees as inherent to creative work). These small ‘innovations’ were rarely considered as being fully new within the economy or the creative industries in general, and in some cases not even within their own sector. On the contrary, respondents argued that this newness was highly contextual and localised. Similarly, many rejected the idea of being specifically innovative individuals, yet at the same time, they saw their work as innovative (within a specific context) in a self-evident way. Likewise, they linked innovation to creativity or even the necessity of a creative drive in their work. Innovation in their field, they argued, is intertwined with their everyday work; it is part and parcel of working in sectors such as the creative industries as was also indicated by Hutter and Stark (2015). This also corroborates the findings of Oakley et al. (2008) for British artists and advertising professionals. In addition to such contextualised forms of innovation, some respondents also referred to social and communicative effects of innovation, which resonates with Dogruel’s (2014) conceptualisation of media innovations.

In conclusion, we argue that innovation in the creative industries is best understood by taking a holistic view, including its sources and outcomes, and that innovation is a process or a by-product of a process that is more than mere creativity or successful implementations of novel ideas or products. Contrary to STEM sectors innovation, in which innovation is goal-oriented and often a costly and well-planned procedure (Caves, 2000; Pratt & Gornostaeva, 2009), the results indicate that for creative workers, innovation in the creative industries is a process and a by-product of creative production. It is dependent upon openness to the environment and the utilisation of existing or creating new methods that increase or deliver high quality outputs that are new in specific contexts. The goal of this innovation is not so much developing the spill-overs to the wider economy as many policy reports indicate (e.g. UNCTAD, 2010) but rather achieving an artistic or social goal that allows the creative worker to continue her or his practices. Innovation, in this, is not an objective in itself, but rather a means to achieving a sustainable business continuation.

Thus, our perspective partly overlaps with the traditional view of TTP and the more recent CPP innovation (Jaaniste, 2009), yet it places less emphasis on the market and societal acceptance. In our view, and most similar to the notion of artistic innovation as described by Castañer and Campos (2002) or Pratt and Jeffcutt's work (2009), innovation in the creative industries should be considered a field-specific process that has value in specific contexts and locations and takes different shapes in different settings. This allows an introspective view on the creative industries and, thus, a better way of understanding innovation in this particular context. Moreover, such a definition indicates that many innovations are produced out of the motivations *to make things better* or *to make better things*, but also that these innovations are shaped and created by their localities and the idiosyncrasies of the creative fields.

DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

What does this mean for research on innovation and the creative industries? In current research, innovation is defined in many different ways, either through contrasting it to TPP innovation (e.g. Caves, 2000; Pratt & Gornostaeva, 2009; Jaaniste, 2009) or by developing a specific creative industries innovation definition (Cappetta et al., 2006; Castañer & Campos, 2002; Miles & Green, 2008; Stoneman, 2009). In cultural policy, a similar attitude towards innovation and the creative industries can be observed (Oakley, 2009). The primary concern in both fields is that, even though innovation and the creative industries are considered to be tightly interwoven, little attention is paid to how we should consider innovation within these industries.

Our analysis indicates that innovation in the creative industries is often contextual, meaning that the changes in style, form, product, service or organisation are rarely fully new. On the contrary, most innovations are new in a specific field (following Castañer & Campos, 2002): a specific place, a sub-sector or a particular scene. Obviously, evaluating such forms of innovation is much more complicated than those that can easily be quantified, such as the traditional measures of for example R&D expenditure and patents (see also Gordon & McCann, 2005b). Yet, the current assumptions on which much of the policy reports and to a lesser extent academic research is built, do not fully catch all these nuances of innovation in the creative industries. Taking our proposed contextualised field approach to innovation helps in nuancing the link between innovation and the creative industries, and opens up doors to new forms of analysis that include the many forms of innovation in these sectors.

Such a field approach requires a sensitivity to the multitude of interactions that contribute to the development and adoption of creative products and services, as well as a conscientious study of the products' and services' contributors and its consumers. In the words of Pratt & Jeffcutt (2009): *“Interaction is the key, but interaction that cuts across the conventional boundaries of this field*

(e.g. *commercial/non, formal/non, arts/cultural etc.*)" (p. 274). In practice, this demands a careful and in-depth analysis of the many facets of the practices of creative workers, including but not limited to: social (micro) interactions and cooperation, co-location, the creatives' physical environment (e.g. cities, neighbourhoods, buildings and offices) and education. This too is the line of research that will be pursued in the upcoming chapters of this dissertation.

The explorative nature of this study does raise some additional questions that could be addressed in future research. The first issue is related to the overlap between the creative industries and workers. Nearly all respondents were either self-employed or were part of a small sized enterprise. Even though this is common for the creative industries (Hesmondhalgh, 2012), this could indicate a conflation between entrepreneurship and creative workers. Future research on entrepreneurship and innovation could clarify whether the findings are indeed characteristic of the creative industries, or if they are a result of generic attitudes of small entrepreneurs and those working in SMEs. Furthermore, our sample primarily consisted of Dutch creative workers located in the Netherlands. Cultural connotations of a concept such as innovation (e.g. Mueller & Thomas, 2001) may have influenced how it is discussed among the respondents. Discussing innovation in the Netherlands with creatives or entrepreneurs might therefore yield different results compared to doing similar research in other countries. Cross-cultural or cross-national comparative research could explore the generalisability of the findings of this study.

Additionally, while this chapter aims to take a new step in reconceptualising innovation in the creative industries, further steps are needed for developing a more in-depth understanding. First of all, this analysis is based on self-reported definitions of innovation; this allows an insight in the self-perceived practices of creative workers, but does not capture their actual multi-faceted innovation practices. Moreover, little is known about how this continuous, field-specific form of innovation occurs and how this could be measured (if at all) or assessed. Therefore,

further research is needed to investigate the sources and forms of innovation of creative workers. Such research should examine the daily practices of innovation of creative entrepreneurs in order to develop a better understanding of the negotiations of newness and creative (re)production in order to fully grasp the many shades of innovation in the creative industries. This is exactly what the next chapter aims to do.

Chapter 3

“From collective passions to
spaces for ideas”

*Sources of innovation for
creative workers*

INTRODUCTION

Innovation and creativity are considered vital ingredients for (urban) economic growth and development (Currid-Halkett & Stolarick, 2013; Florida, 2002; Hall, 1998). In recent decades, the Western world has witnessed a decline of the important traditional industries. In the second half of the twentieth century, especially Fordist manufacturing industries were progressively replaced by so called knowledge intensive industries. These knowledge intensive industries, which include the creative industries, relied upon a process of continuous renewal as sources of growth, instead of, for example, increased efficiency or access to raw materials (Hotho & Champion, 2011). This importance of renewal - radical or 'humdrum' - is the driver of the booming interest in innovation.

Along with a growing business, industry and policy attention to innovation, academic research on this topic has flourished. As discussed in the previous chapter, innovation has been historically tied to the fate of the entrepreneur, who Schumpeter (1934) - arguably the trailblazer of innovation research - coined the 'agent of innovation'. In Schumpeter's (1934) broad definition of innovation (including new production processes, new products, new materials or resources, new markets and new forms of organisations), however, lies the foundation of later difficulties in, increasingly important in an innovation-intensive economy, measuring it (Wijngaarden, Hitters, & Bhansing, 2019b). Innovation from the mid-twentieth century - following the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Frascati (from 1962) and Oslo (from 1992) manuals - became synonymous with R&D expenditure and patents. Noticeably, the sources contributing to this much-pursued innovation have been equally difficult to determine. The role of R&D has in this respect been the most prominent source, used especially by economists (e.g. Bottazzi & Peri, 2007). Others, for example those in business and psychology, often pointed at individual entrepreneurial abilities, top leadership, competitors or employees (Phillips & Phillips, 2017; Zahra & Wright, 2011).

Yet, one birthplace of innovation has recently become increasingly acknowledged both by academics as well as policy makers (e.g. Cox, 2005): the creative industries (Castañer & Campos, 2002; Comunian et al., 2010; Cooke & De Propris, 2011; Miles & Green, 2008; Müller et al., 2009). These industries are considered to be the avant-garde of innovation intensive information services (Cooke & De Propris, 2011; Handke, 2006) by having ‘transformative’ economic powers (C. Jones & Thornton, 2005). Moreover, they are taking an increasing segment of the overall economy in many urban regions in the Western World (Bontje et al., 2011). They offer insights into the recent changes in the global economy, and especially in how the innovations driving these changes are fostered by individuals and organisations (C. Jones et al., 2016).

These industries differ from other sectors in several respects. First, smaller firms and self-employed workers are over-represented (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). As described in Chapter 2, continuous renewal is among the key principles for surviving for them, with a strong dependence on novelty and distinctiveness, both boosted by the artists’ and creators’ need for artistic expression as well as the audiences’ demand for new experiences (C. Jones et al., 2016). The mere replication and reproduction of existing designs bear the risk of being ‘boring’ (Becker, 1982; Caves, 2000). Therefore, the output of the creative industries, according to Potts (2007), cannot be reduced to goods and services alone: they produce innovation and R&D. Yet, such activities are most often perceived as investments in projects instead of in research or technologies (Benghozi & Salvador, 2016). Consequently, the creative industries provide an interesting case for studying the sources as innovation, as they are characterised by a continuous struggle for innovation, between entrepreneurship and the creation of new and creative products and services, or by art and commerce (Caves, 2000).

However, empirical evidence on the link between the creative industries and innovation is limited (Sunley et al., 2008; Lee & Drever, 2013), frequently based on the macro-level, on case studies (Protogerou et al., 2017) and generally with lit-

tle attention to the experiences of ‘real entrepreneur’ (Meyer, 2009). Moreover, on the individual level, the idea generating and problem solving capabilities of entrepreneurs are often considered as stable personality traits (Ardichvili, Cardozo, & Ray, 2003; Baron & Tang, 2011), whereas recent research indicated that innovativeness and creativity are a state, rather than a trait (Weinberger, Wach, Stephan, & Wegge, 2018). In such a state (or within-person) level approach, creativeness and innovation are considered malleable and shaped by daily influences. This fits the growing recognition of research on the context of economic behaviour of individual entrepreneurs (Welter, 2011), i.e., the factors shaping and influencing fluctuations in individual creativity and innovativeness. Especially for the creative industries, with their dependence on continuous novelty, and whose activities are often organised and collaborative, this is a pressing issue (C. Jones et al., 2016).

This chapter aims to fill this gap by answering the research question which contextual factors contribute to innovation for creative workers?³⁶ First, it takes the perspective of the (freelance) worker in micro-businesses and SMEs (Miles & Green, 2008) in the context of her or his daily work practices (Weinberger et al., 2018). It adds to the existing literature by empirically and inductively presenting the main drivers of innovation as experienced by the individual practitioner in the creative industries, including the individual traits, but also contexts affecting the innovational state. Second, it attempts to develop a comprehensible typology of the sources of innovation in the creative industries by synthesising this empirical, inductive, analysis with a deductive approach based on a literature review and a subsequent survey among creative firms (see e.g. Braun & Clarke, 2006).

By knowing more about the perspective of the creative workers and its modifying factors, governments and educational institutions may find a better alignment of the different players

³⁶ I see creative workers here as entrepreneurs. Yet, considering the discussion in Chapter 1 about creative work and entrepreneurship, I have confined myself as much as possible to using ‘creative worker’ throughout this dissertation.

in the triple helix (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997), which in turn may facilitate the rate of innovations and effective government attempts to stimulate the innovative economy through the creative industries (Cooke & De Propriis, 2011). It provides workers with insight into their own processes, so that they can manage their creative processes better (e.g. Weinberger et al., 2018), and makes insights into these innovational practices available for governments and educational institutions. Finally, academic research profits from this approach to fill the lacuna in this field: while there is ample research on innovation in the creative industries, the contexts in which these innovations happen have been difficult to disentangle.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Innovation and individual traits

As Amabile (1996) argues: *“All innovation begins with creative ideas [...] creativity by individuals and teams is a starting point for innovation”* (p. 143), with creativity being *“the generation of novel and useful ideas by an individual or small group of individuals working together”* (Amabile, 1988, p. 126). Innovation, then, is the implementation of such ideas in the products and services, as well as in the work processes of the creative worker. Creativity is thus a necessary but not sufficient condition for innovation (Dimov, 2007). Indeed, much of the existing research on innovation sources has been confined to taking an agentic perspective, emphasising the role and influence of workers’ individual (creative) traits and drive in the innovation processes (C. Jones et al., 2016). The romantic and traditional concept of the creating artist, designing and implementing radical new ideas, serves as an indispensable inspiration for such an approach (Scott, 2006; Bourdieu, 1993).

Innovation in this discourse, both in- and outside of the creative industries, is the product and instrument of individual firms, creative workers and organisations (Feldman & Florida, 1994; Schumpeter, 1934). These workers, especially in the creative industries, have a need for expression and continuous re-

newal (Caves, 2000; Storr, 1993). Such individual creativity indicates that creative workers use their emotions and aspirations, in addition to their individual resources such as their backgrounds and cultures, in order to develop and implement new products (C. Jones et al., 2016). Entrepreneurship research too, both in psychology and in economics, has focussed on the individual abilities, traits and characteristics (Zahra & Wright, 2011).

However, despite the tendency to overestimate the personal influence and to underestimate the impact of external factors in assessing the behaviour of entrepreneurs or creative workers (Gartner et al., 2006), innovation is rarely the act of the lone, individual genius, and often, many other factors contribute to the innovativeness of individuals (C. Jones et al., 2016). Indeed, the state approach to creativity and innovation as described by Weinberger et al. (2018) emphasises how contextual factors influence individual creativeness, entrepreneurship and innovativeness. Including this context offers more grounded explanations, covering more subtle connections among the relevant variables (Zahra & Wright, 2011).

Innovation as a state: contextual factors

The idea of innovativeness as a state influenced by contextual factors is, on the macro-level, acknowledged by a broad range of academic work. This section presents some of the most prominent approaches, comparable to four dimensions outlined by Welter (2011): business, institutional, networks and spatial. A large proportion of research on innovation (including the creative industries, see e.g. Cohendet Cohendet & Simon, 2007) has focussed on R&D activities and university linkages as the determinant of innovation. Yet, for firms that deal with the application and combination of existing knowledge or the aesthetic attributes of products, formal knowledge, research and education are relatively non-essential (Asheim et al., 2007). As such, for the creative industries, the linear model of innovation that asserts that scientific and technological knowledge is applied in firms and lead to innovation (Godin, 2006), does hardly cover the full width of contributions to the 'innovational state' of individuals

(Weinberger et al., 2018). Therefore, Volpi (2017) argues that different types of innovations require different sources. For example, effects of (academic) research on innovation are different from innovation triggered by other firms, such as suppliers. This indicates that additional partners need to be included in the analyses of the sources of innovation as well.

Thus, the triple helix provides an important point of departure, focussing on academic, governmental and business interests (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997). Despite the limited dependence of the creative industries on R&D and other research activities compared to many other industries, national innovation agendas include efforts to strengthen such collaborative initiatives (see for the Dutch case e.g. Janssen, 2015; Nijzink, Hooogen, & Gielen, 2017) and may provide incentives for workers in the creative industries to participate in research collaborations with research institutes (Cunningham, Cutler, Hearn, Ryan, & Keane, 2004). Such entrepreneurial universities and R&D activities are thought to encourage innovation not only on the individual level, but the wider regions too (Etzkowitz, 2012; Fitjar & Rodríguez-Pose, 2015). This includes what Sunley, Pinch, Reimer and Macmillen (2008) see as a distinctive industrial architecture or what is called an innovation system (Potts, 2007). Therefore, this suggests that local networks should also be taken into account when assessing the sources of innovation.

Indeed, for many low and medium tech organisations, such as the creative industries, the traditional R&D approach is just one of the many activities that may lead to innovation. Across a wide range of academic disciplines, collaboration, interaction and networks with agents outside of the firm are also considered crucial for sparking innovation (Santamaría, Nieto, & Barge-Gil, 2009). These networks encourage information flows between people and firms by job changes (Bakhshi, McVittie, & Simmie, 2008). In the creative industries particularly, such knowledge transfer also occurs through project-based working (Caves, 2000). Similarly, supply-chain relationships encourage interactions between buyers and sellers are also facilitating knowledge-exchange (Roy, Sivakumar, & Wilkinson, 2004), such

as the interaction between the game and multi-media industries and hardware production (Béraud, Castel, & Cormerais, 2012). In this, diversity is important, as Fey and Birkinshaw (2005) argue, innovation is driven by new combinations of resources, ideas and technologies. This strongly resembles the so-called ‘Jacobs externalities’ that demarcate diversity as a crucial condition for innovation, and contradicts the Marshall-Arrow-Romer (MAR) thesis that emphasises that knowledge spillovers are most efficiently and effectively leading to innovation where the industrial economy is specialised (Cooke & Lazzarretti, 2008). These networks may contribute to atmospheres encouraging innovation, attracting new, talented workers and generating overall growth (Turok, 2003). Creative workers, even those who operate in relative isolation, may use such atmospheres for innovation (Drake, 2003).

Similarly, proximity is thought to stimulate innovation by means of cumulative learning processes through face-to-face contacts (Boschma, 2005). Grabher (2002) argues that creative workers in such knowledge bases are “*surrounded by a concoction of rumours, impressions, recommendations, trade folklore and strategic misinformation*” (p. 209). This ‘buzz’ can be described as an information and communication ecology, which is especially fed by face-to-face contacts and the proximity of people and firms (Asheim et al., 2007; Bathelt et al., 2004). Thus, social and personal proximity, referring to respectively closeness in actors related to informal rules, common language and shared habits and personality traits and features, may contribute to a firm’s innovativeness (Capone & Lazzarretti, 2018).

The local embeddedness of networks and ‘buzzing’ communities indicate that innovation is more likely to occur in certain places and thus, that geographic and demographic characteristics could be a relevant source of innovation. Especially from the 1990s, this link between networks, clusters, innovative milieus and competitive advantages of place became a key research topic in various fields, and most prominently in economic and cultural geography (e.g. Castells & Hall, 1994; Pratt, 2008a; Scott, 2006). This eminently is relevant for the creative

industries, where production is often strongly localised, making it a remarkably territorialised sector (Béraud et al., 2012).

Particularly influential has been the work of Porter (2000) on clustering. He argued technological possibilities that are spread more easily through face-to-face interactions, increased flexibilisation through the availability of facilities and services, and improved motivation to innovate due to the pressure of nearby rivals, enhancing innovation. Feldman & Florida (1994) emphasised that clusters are catalysts for innovation as they promote information transfer and spillovers that decrease the costs and risks of innovation. The scale economies of a strong technological infrastructure, including R&D and the agglomerations of firms in related industries, afford cross-fertilisation and effective technology transfer through face-to-face interactions. Especially in diverse and creative cities, clustered firms tend to reap the benefits in terms of innovation (Lee & Rodríguez-Pose, 2014b).

Finally, such localities can be of tremendous influence, not only on the macro-level, but also to the individual creative workers. For example, as Drake (2003) argued, interactions and innovations in the immediate neighbourhood can be of considerable significance for cultural production. This highlights that innovation is something dynamic that goes beyond the individual trait. Yet, how analyses on the macro-level on contextual factors triggering innovation translate to the level of the individual workers requires further analysis.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

In order to generate a typology of the sources of innovation in the creative industries, we take the perspective of the practitioners: creative workers or entrepreneurs in The Netherlands. Here, we follow the definition of Schumpeter (1934), who distinguished between the inventor and the entrepreneur, with the former (just) producing ideas without any economic impact, and the latter also implementing them in order to make

a profit. Following the approach of De Bruin (2007), in terms of the creative industries, inventors are closer to what we consider as artists, and entrepreneurs are closest to the respondents our sample: those who ‘get things done’ and make at least enough of a profit to be able to rent a workplace and make a living. As we take the perspective of the entrepreneurs on what contributes to their innovational processes, we are interested in the most prominent self-reported sources of innovation, and the contexts and settings in which it occurs (Wijngaarden et al., 2019b).

Our methods consists of a two-step mixed methods approach. First, we are building on the 43 in-depth interviews as described in Chapter 1. The respondents were informed about the topic of the interviews beforehand and introduced to the research project. They were asked, among some other topics, about their professional work, their perceived creativity and entrepreneurship, their definitions of innovation in general and for the creative industries, their own innovativeness, what contributes to innovation, which settings make them (more) innovative, how they develop new ideas and implement them, and whether and how they think innovativeness can be measured. All interviews were coded in Atlas.ti in an iterative, bottom-up approach. We used a thematic analysis, with the themes being developed mostly during the first interviews, and examined more in-depth in the later ones. Doing this, we aimed at uncovering the full breadth of the sources of innovation in order to compare and contrast with the existing literature (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Second, observations derived from the interviews were used – together with existing literature on this topic – in order to develop a list of 14 items of potential sources (see Table 3) that served as the basis for a quantitative analysis. Our aim was to develop an overview of clusters of sources. The Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries (CICI) Survey Part 1 provided the empirical quantitative data for this research. This survey mainly focussed on working in creative business centres, creative labour and entrepreneurship, place reputation and innovation. In this survey, we used a seven-point Likert type scale,

ranging from 'Not at all necessary' for innovation to 'Very necessary' for innovation.

A sample of 916 firms located in 9 of the cases (Belcanto in Haarlem, BINK36 in The Hague, Creative Factory in Rotterdam, De Gruyter Fabriek in Den Bosch, De Honig Fabriek in Koog aan de Zaan, Dutch Game Garden in Utrecht, Hazemeijer Hengelo in Hengelo, Klein Haarlem in Haarlem and Strijp-S in Eindhoven) were sent an invitation to a survey with a cover letter explaining the topic and importance of the research project. In 8 locations, the respondents were notified about our study by the clusters' managers by email. In one cluster, a research assistant distributed and collected surveys on paper by delivering a mail package which included a paper version of the questionnaire as well an accompanying letter instructing them on anonymity measures. A total of 182 surveys were completed, representing a response rate of 20%. The survey was only available in Dutch.

RESULTS

Exploring self-reported sources of innovation of creative workers

Interestingly, for many of the respondents, innovation is not a goal in itself, but rather a by-product of creative production in general. Hence, the engine behind creative production, in this respect, is not the drive to innovate, but the drive to do creative work and to solve problems encountered when doing creative work. Tom [Design], for example, mentioned that when work pressure was rising, he felt the drive to manage his projects much more efficiently. Doing this, he argued that he increased his skills, became more entrepreneurial and solved his problems resourcefully. He thus stated that:

"Innovation is a by-product of your own drive, if you want to be better, you think of something new, you adjust your processes, you adjust your vocabulary. All those kind of things, yes, then you end up with something that you could say is innovative."

Similarly, James [Music and visual and performing arts] emphasised that always solving your challenges in the same way becomes rather dull. Consequently, for many, passion makes one of the most important prerequisites for innovation. Daniel [Crafts] mentioned that, when looking for innovative practices, researchers should look for “*the collective passions of creative workers*”, and Charlie [Film, video and photography] echoed this idea: “*When you repeat the same trick over and over, you will lose your passion. You want to inspire yourself and motivate yourself. Taking this extra step, because you want to become better at what you do.*”

The work of Bhansing, Hitters & Wijngaarden (2018) indicates that such passion, however, does not only affect individual work practices: it ‘sticks’ to certain places. This suggests that other creative workers in the same building or region may have an important influence in driving innovation. Indeed, all respondents cooperated and interacted – in formal and informal ways – with other creative workers in their vicinity. The vast majority of them considered their out-of-the-box thinking neighbour as an important catalyst for renewal and innovation. Sometimes, this may be caused by formal cooperation on a project, but regularly these ‘inspirational’ interactions were caused by informally pitching your ideas to other creatives. Especially when the respondents were ‘stuck’ and did not know how to proceed with their work, the input of other creatives was highly appreciated. Jessica [Arts and antiques] for example, described how this works for her:

“When you continuously have this cooperation and interaction, and invent new things together... do innovative stuff... Then it could be that I have no ideas, but when someone else comes in with something completely different which makes me think: ‘oh yes, wow!’”

However, such innovations did not only occur through interactions with their co-located peers. In line with the research of Stam, De Jong and Marlet (2008) – who argued that creative firms were more often than average firms embracing open in-

novation practices, and see their innovations more often caused by knowledge exchange with other partners – external contacts such as clients and customers also account for an important source of innovation. Heidi [Arts and antiques], for example, used her external networks for learning about new ceramic glazing technologies. Others, such as Mark [Software and electronic publishing], even referred to online communities such as GitHub keeping him up to date on recent creative tech conferences. In other cases, new knowledge is exchanged in innovation events or specific local knowledge centres.

Also, quite a few respondents emphasised that the local university has been of great value to their work and the overall innovativeness of their sector in that particular region, such as William [Design]: *“So, I just think it’s sort of fortuitous that Eindhoven, because of the academy, because of Brainport, because of the university, Technical University, that it’s become this kind of hot pot of ingredients, you know.”* For others, like Rachel [Design], having an educational institute nearby also provides other, more unexpected, advantages:

“When the University of Applied Sciences was here [in this building] as well, you noticed that it was much livelier here. And they [the students] made you think: who are you? What do you want to achieve? How are you going to do that? I miss that now that they’ve relocated. These questions gave me a bit of a headache, but it was good nonetheless.”

Additionally, it is important to note that all interviews have been conducted with creative workers that are co-located in a specific kind of studio or office: a creative business centre or co-working space. The vast majority of these spaces are housed in formerly industrial buildings. The industrial heritage of many of these creative business centres exudes to their current inhabitants, e.g. the innovation of Philips inspires young workers in the current Strijp-S cluster in the former light bulb and radio factories in Eindhoven. Interestingly, most interviewees were able to tell the story of their building’s history, and often used this history for

personal research endeavours or artistic projects.³⁷ Here, Jane Jacobs' famous quote echoes: 'new ideas need old buildings'. Bjorn [Advertising], for example, explained:

"[The building] has a character. You just see it, when you're at our elevator, you see all these pictures passing by of Philips' history, and in the machine room here, there are still these old machines and stuff. So yes, it just has a character making it eh, yes, inspiring."

Thus, the (historical) look and feel (cf. Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010) of these buildings influence how the respondents experience their daily practices, as well as, in some cases, inspire their innovative work. Daniel [Crafts] highlights this by mentioning that "[t]here is a lot of space for new ideas here. The atmosphere in this building is an atmosphere that contributes to innovation." In sum, this atmosphere also contributed to the 'field' of localised practices of innovation in the creative industries.

A final source of innovation, according to the respondents, is having an open attitude towards unusual approaches. This starts from early life: children ought not to be hampered in their fantasies, and sticking to the rules should not be the first priority in education and life, as James [Music and visual and performing arts] argued. This makes people open to new techniques, getting to know things you do not know. Being open, one can absorb the frequently mentioned contribution of social networks and the local creatives to innovation. This often does not materialise as direct cooperation, but rather as 'buzz', the 'community feeling' and just seeing other people work on their projects. Being among peers helps in fostering motivation, strengthening the internal drive, and encourages out-of-the-box thinking.

³⁷ This idea is further explored and developed in Chapter 7 of this dissertation.

Towards a typology of innovation sources for the creative industries

In conclusion, the interviews with creative workers yielded a wide variety of potential sources of innovation, including an individual's passion and attitude, formal and informal interactions, external partners such as educational institutions and the (symbolic) atmosphere of a place. In the literature, we found (academic) research and development, knowledge diffusion through networks and 'buzz', the influence of places and clusters and individual entrepreneurial traits to be most prevalent drivers of innovation.

Thus, interestingly, the deductive (literature) and inductive (interviews) approaches show some overlap, yet they also complement each other in various aspects. This indicates that these empirical results add relevant contributions to the established sources of innovation. In order to corroborate these findings and simultaneously develop a typology of the sources of innovation in the creative industries, we aimed at synthesising the various approaches by doing an additional quantitative analysis based on a survey among creative workers in The Netherlands. Based on the sources frequently mentioned in the current literature, as well as the themes derived from the qualitative analysis, we developed a list of 14 recurrent sources. For all of these 14 recurrent sources from the literature and the interviews, the respondents of the survey were asked how much these sources contributed to their innovativeness on a 7-point Likert scale (see Table 3).

Subsequently, we aimed at identifying clusters of sources of innovation in these 14 items by using a principal component analysis (PCA) with orthogonal rotation (varimax). The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure, which verified the sample's adequacy for factor analysis, was .772, which is above the minimum criterion of .5 and falls into the range of 'good'. All KMO values for individual items were $>.647$, which is well above the acceptable limit of .5 (Field, 2017). All factors had an Eigenvalue of 1 or higher and in combination they explained 65.7% of the variance. Each item loads on its appropriate factor with

primary loadings greater than .60, and cross-loading lower than .43. The analysis yielded 4 components after using the varimax rotation (see Table 4). Reliability analysis indicates that the internal consistency reliability of the measures in the four factors are the following: for Component 1 a Cronbach’s α of .846, for Component 2 a Cronbach’s α of .787, and for Component 4 Cronbach’s α of .713. After omitting *Learning new techniques or acquiring knowledge about new technologies* from Component 3, Cronbach’s α rose to .733 instead of .639.

Table 3: 14 sources of innovation from in-depth interviews and literature review

<p>Collaboration with other entrepreneurs outside of my field</p>	<p>The interviews suggested that collaboration is, according to a large number of respondents, an important source of innovation. Entrepreneurs outside of their own field indicates the importance of Jacobs externalities: a local variety of industries (Galliano, Magrini, & Triboulet, 2015; J. M. Jacobs, 1970). We decided to include both formal and informal collaboration in this item, as we observed that these often overlapped for many respondents in our interviews.</p>
<p>Collaboration with other entrepreneurs within my field</p>	<p>Collaboration with creative entrepreneurs within their own field points towards Marshall-Arrow-Romer (MAR) externalities (Galliano et al., 2015), suggesting that the concentration of a specific industry results in knowledge-exchange and thus innovation (Arrow, 1962; Marshall, 1890; Romer, 1986). Again, this includes both formal and informal collaboration – sources of innovation that were frequently mentioned in the interviews.</p>
<p>The proximity of other entrepreneurs outside of my field.</p>	<p>The research on ‘buzz’ (Asheim et al., 2007; Bathelt et al., 2004; Storper & Venables, 2004) indicates that ‘being there’ (Gertler, 1995), in the (geographical, social, cognitive and personal (Boschma, 2005; Capone & Lazzaretti, 2018; Leszczyńska & Khachlouf, 2018)) proximity of other entrepreneurs, may contribute to innovation. This item includes a Jacobs externalities approach.</p>

The proximity of other entrepreneurs within my field.	Consequently, this item refers to a MAR-externalities approach to ‘buzz’ and proximity. In the interviews, this ‘buzz’ was considered an important driver of inspiration and innovation.
The entrepreneurial atmosphere in the building in which I work.	From the interviews, we learned that the atmosphere in a building helped respondents in absorbing a place’s innovational practices and opening up to new ideas. Many stated that an entrepreneurial atmosphere – observing other people professionalising and developing their entrepreneurial attitude – facilitated e.g. finding new markets or organisational forms.
The creative atmosphere in the building in which I work.	Similarly, being in a creative environment aided the creative entrepreneurs in our interviews in evoking creative inspiration, which they could put in practice in developing their own new products, projects or services.
The historical and/or cultural value of the building in which I work.	In line with Jacobs’ (1962) assertion that new ideas need old buildings, many respondents argued that the history and symbolic value of their location play a role in their innovational processes.
My immediate environment, such as my studio/office or the building in which I work.	The use value of the direct surroundings is also important for innovation. This includes the practical affordances, such as size or the availability of amenities, but also the ‘look and feel’, e.g. the ‘spacious’ look often mentioned in the interviews.
Customers or clients from the private sector.	In line with the research of e.g. Volpi (2017) and Granados, Bernardo, and Pareja (2017), users in the form of customers or clients are an important source of innovation by requesting new materials or by pilot testing. Often, these are other businesses or consumers.
Customers or clients from the public sector.	However, considering the growing interest of public policy and actors in the creative industries and their innovative capabilities, we also included a distinct item for customers or clients from the public sector.

Research institutions, universities or other forms of education.	Following the vast amount of work on the importance of (university) research for innovation (e.g. the triple helix approach of Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997), as well as the many respondents citing their own education and partnerships with students as an important source of innovation, this item refers to these research institutions and also includes the respondents' own education (as we learned that these two are often intertwined).
My ability to solve problems	In the Schumpeterian approach, the entrepreneur and his/her ability to exploit opportunities are central to evoking innovation (Drucker, 1985). Hence, for many respondents, the individual ability to solve problems creatively is an important source of innovation.
Passion for my profession	The respondents often recalled their passion sparking innovative practices. Similarly, the work of Cardon, Wincent, Singh and Drnovsek (2009) and Bhansing, Hitters and Wijngaarden (2018) indicate that passion is important in entrepreneurial motivation and, we assume, in increased levels of innovation.
Learning new techniques or acquiring knowledge about new technologies.	In the interviews, many creative entrepreneurs argued that learning new techniques or acquiring knowledge about new technologies – through education, formal collaboration, informal collaboration, interactions or by mere information 'buzzing around' – was highly important for their own innovational practices. This could be by actually employing these technologies, but also by sparking the innovational passion mentioned above.

Source: Authors' own

The PCA yielded four components. Component 1 represents *Peers*: the closeness of other creatives. *Peers* includes not only what we consider collaboration, informal or formal, in and outside the respondents' field of work, but also the mere proximity of creative workers. This suggests that – considering that collaboration is a source of innovation, as reported in the interviews – co-location may lead to innovation as well, even for those that do not actually collaborate with their co-located peers. Notably, this underscores the important of 'buzz' (e.g. Asheim et al.,

2007; Bathelt et al., 2004; Storper & Venables, 2004): the informal and often not goal-oriented exchanges of information. This component will be explored further in Chapter 4 and 5.

Table 4: Rotated Component Matrix self-reported innovation sources

	Component			
	1	2	3	4
Collaboration with other entrepreneurs outside of my field.	.833	.109	.109	.089
Collaboration with other entrepreneurs within my field.	.812	.170	.057	.118
The proximity of other entrepreneurs outside of my field.	.777	.237	.139	.134
The proximity of other entrepreneurs within my field.	.681	.324	.208	.130
The entrepreneurial atmosphere in the building in which I work.	.287	.820	.006	.044
The creative atmosphere in the building in which I work.	.297	.747	.172	.088
The historical and/or cultural value of the building in which I work.	.080	.712	.375	-.129
My immediate environment, such as my studio/office or the building in which I work.	.128	.621	.062	.259
Customers or clients from the public sector.	.119	.278	.790	-.047
Customers or clients from the private sector.	.112	.050	.759	.259
Research institutions, universities or other forms of education.	.419	.144	.571	.129
My ability to solve problems.	.176	.006	.201	.843
Passion for my profession.	.066	.069	.136	.809
Learning new techniques or acquiring knowledge about new technologies.	.256	.330	-.336	.538

Source: Authors’ own

Component 2 – the subject of Chapter 6 and 7 – includes a *Place’s* atmosphere, both creative and professional, as well as its historical and symbolic value. The creative atmosphere, our

interviewees suggested, is an important stimulus for evoking and applying new, creative ideas. A professional attitude in turn grants them the look of entrepreneurial success some respondents want to emphasise (especially when receiving clients or customers). Together, they afford an inspiring 'look and feel' (Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010) of a place that - literally and symbolically - provides them 'room to think'. Additionally, the symbolic and historical value of a place relate to what Hutton (2006) considers the historical continuity of place: an old industrial workplace in the urban core "[...] exhibit[s] both the building form and function of 'visible', 'invisible', and 'ephemeral' knowledge production characteristic of innovation in the 18th and 19th centuries, together with contingent cultural and social dislocations" (p. 1839).

The third component refers to what we consider external knowledge by public or private *Partnerships*: input by clients from the public and private sector, as well as research institutions and universities. This resonates with the triple helix model of innovation, in which the public sectors, businesses and academia interact to foster innovation. Especially in the more technology oriented sub-sectors, the respondents referred to such external connections as valuable contributions to their innovative capacities. Even though not all of these contacts are officially partners, we consider them 'partners' in innovation.

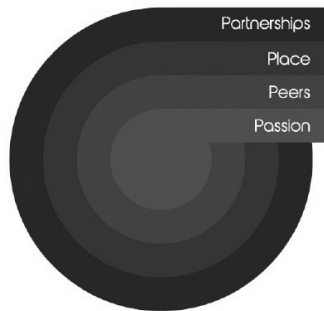
Finally, component 4, including individual traits such as the ability to solve (creative) problems and *Passion* is strongly related to the Schumpeterian notion of entrepreneurship, in which innovation is the product of individual endeavors (e.g. Feldman & Florida, 1994). Some respondents argued that innovation is a necessary by-product of creative work, and thus inherently connected to their organisations. For them, entrepreneurship is a continuous search for creating new and different products, services, materials, configurations or values (Drucker, 1985).

Together, we interpret these four components as the four Ps: *Partnerships*, *Place*, *Peers* and *Passion*. Figure 2 illustrates these four components, ranging from the component most external to the creative worker (*Partnerships*) to the factors most internal to the creative worker (his/her individual drive and *Passion*).

A brief note on frequencies and importance of components

Though all four Ps were mentioned by the respondents in the qualitative study, the distribution was not even. Most important have been *Peers* and *Passion*, which were mentioned by respectively 25 and 22 respondents; more than half of the sample. 14 respondents highlighted the importance of *Place* in their innovative practices, and 9 referred to *Partnerships* with clients and institutions. While many only brought up *Peers* or *Partnerships*, *Place* and especially *Passion* often co-occurred with other components. A significant number of respondents emphasised that though the individual drive and passion to innovate is an important, even necessary condition, it is impossible to do this without input from others.

Figure 2: The 4 Ps of innovation



We also observed that the components were not distributed evenly among DCMS sectors. Respondents working in advertising much more often brought up their own passion and drive to innovate. Artists, however, also relied on *Passion*, but often also on their location’s spatial aesthetic, symbolic and historical value. *Peers* were especially important for those working in Music, Visual and Performing Arts, which resonates well with the motley crew properties (Caves, 2000) of especially those sectors. Finally, the minority that designated *Partnerships* as drivers of innovation were most often designers.

CONCLUSION

This chapter addressed two gaps in the literature. First, it provides empirical evidence from the perspective of the creative worker. Most of the rich and extensive literature on innovation has focussed on traditional measures of innovation such as R&D and the drive and individual traits of entrepreneurship. Other researchers pointed at the creative industries as important drivers of innovation and economic growth. However, what drives innovation for workers in these creative industries remains difficult to determine, especially because the creative industries have a different structure compared to most other industries. Firms are often SMEs or self-employed workers (Hesmondhalgh, 2012), work more often occurs on a project-basis (Grabher, 2004) and includes partners from a variety of sectors (Caves, 2000). Contrary to the majority of literature on this topic, which focussed on larger organisations or institutions, and following the thesis that creative workers are the *avant-garde* of the information economy (Cooke & De Propris, 2011; Handke, 2006), we have taken the perspective of the creative worker in order to investigate her or his specific view on what contributes to their innovativeness.

Second, this research aims to explore the contextual factors that shape the innovative state. It challenges the idea that only individual traits, academic research and R&D (as in the linear model of innovation) contribute to innovation, especially for the context of the creative industries. We follow Weinberger et al. (2018) and Welter (2011), who argued that entrepreneurship is contextual and creativity is malleable by external influences and propose that this also applies to innovation, with collaboration with other actors, including suppliers, research institutes and others firms having a tremendous influence on individual innovativeness. Specifically, this research contributes to exploring the factors catalysing an innovative state by observing the daily influences shaping innovation (Weinberger et al., 2018), and adds to the growing recognition of research on the context economic behaviour of individual entrepreneurs (Welter,

2011). In sum, we aimed to investigate the micro-foundations and behaviours of creative entrepreneurs that create and influence macro-structures of innovation (Zahra & Wright, 2011) by developing an overview of the particular factors that might contribute to innovative states.

Our analysis yielded four main clusters of sources of innovation according to creative workers. From most internal to the individual to most external: *Passion* – the skills, entrepreneurial and professional attitudes – resonates most with innovation as an individual trait, or the romantic idea of the artistic genius (C. Jones et al., 2016; Scott, 2006; Bourdieu, 1993). The qualitative study highlighted that *Passion* was, for many, a necessary condition for innovation, yet often not the only one. In order to spark innovation, it was contextualised by other external factors, such as, and most prominently, the vicinity of *Peers*, the closeness of and collaboration with other creatives inside and outside the own field of work. Additionally, others emphasised the importance of *Place*: a location’s creative and professional atmosphere, as well as its historical and symbolic value and the affordances and properties of their immediate environments, such as the studio, office or building. Finally, *Partnerships*, the contacts with agents outside their direct surroundings could also heighten the innovative state of the respondents.

The middle two, *Peers* and *Place*, are essential to answering the question how co-location might foster innovation. Therefore, the following four chapters will focus on these particular two sources. First, by zooming in on the practices of knowledge exchange and collaboration in Dutch creative workplaces, and by taking a micro-interactionalist perspective in how such interactions are instigated. Second, next to actual networks between creatives, such places could also become a node in symbolic networks; the networks that are created by outsiders and exist beyond collaboration (Braden & Teekens, 2017). Moreover, these (often post-industrial) workplaces adhere to rather universal aesthetic conventions. Such symbolic connections influence many individual creative workers, often freelance, who tend to have the freedom to work anywhere, but who also risk isola-

tion and sharply restricted opportunities for collaboration and networking (J. Brown, 2017). The final two empirical chapters explore how such forms of capital are essential for the continuation and sustainability of such locations as well as for the creatives themselves, and therefore for the potential for knowledge exchange and innovation in the creative industries.

DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

This research has provided the four most prominent sources of innovation according to creative workers in The Netherlands. However, as this research is confined to co-located creative workers residing in co-working spaces and/or creative clusters, the results might have a bias in the sense that they, more than non-co-located creative workers, emphasise the importance of the vicinity of their peers or other place-related aspects. Therefore, we have refrained from developing a ranking based on importance, as the sample characteristics may have a bias towards the importance of location-based assets. It thus only briefly touches upon how important these sources are for this group, and does not quantitatively designate any differences between sub-sectors (e.g. Protoogerou et al., 2017) or other demographics.

Indeed, the qualitative study did yield some potential other sources – including having an ‘open attitude’, digital technologies (especially in software and digital design sectors) and several forms of education – that might be more prevalent in other groups, such as individually located creative workers, workers in other sectors or larger firms, or those outside of the Netherlands. As such, this research could be the starting point for succeeding studies that could use this typology and investigate differences between sub-groups as well as the importance of specific sources in general. Additionally, future research could also explore how innovation through these four sources more specifically works. For example, this could be done by relating *Partnerships* to empirical work on public-private partnerships or triple helix research (e.g. Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997), *Place*

to balance cluster research on agglomeration externalities (Gordon & McCann, 2005b; Porter, 2000; Van der Panne, 2004), and *Peers* to 'buzz', knowledge exchange and (micro-)interactions between creative workers (Asheim et al., 2007; Bathelt et al., 2004). Finally, *Passion* can challenge existing research on individual creativity (Ardichvili et al., 2003) as well as trait and state innovation research (Weinberger et al., 2018).

Likewise, the vast majority of the respondents of both the survey and the interviews are Dutch. Obviously, this could lead to differences in the mentioned sources, as cultural values, institutional and educational infrastructures and support systems differ between nations, and individual drive and creativity may vary across cultures (Faber & Heslen, 2004; Jan Fagerberg & Srholec, 2008; Lundvall, 1992; Zahra & Wright, 2011). In a similar vein, whether these findings also apply to entrepreneurs outside of the creative industries should be investigated. Creative workers often have different perspectives on entrepreneurial growth (Loots & Witteloostuijn, 2018) and are even more so than most other sectors characterised by a continuous struggle for novelty and innovation (Caves, 2000). Future research, therefore, could investigate whether this typology would also hold in other nations, cultures and sectors.

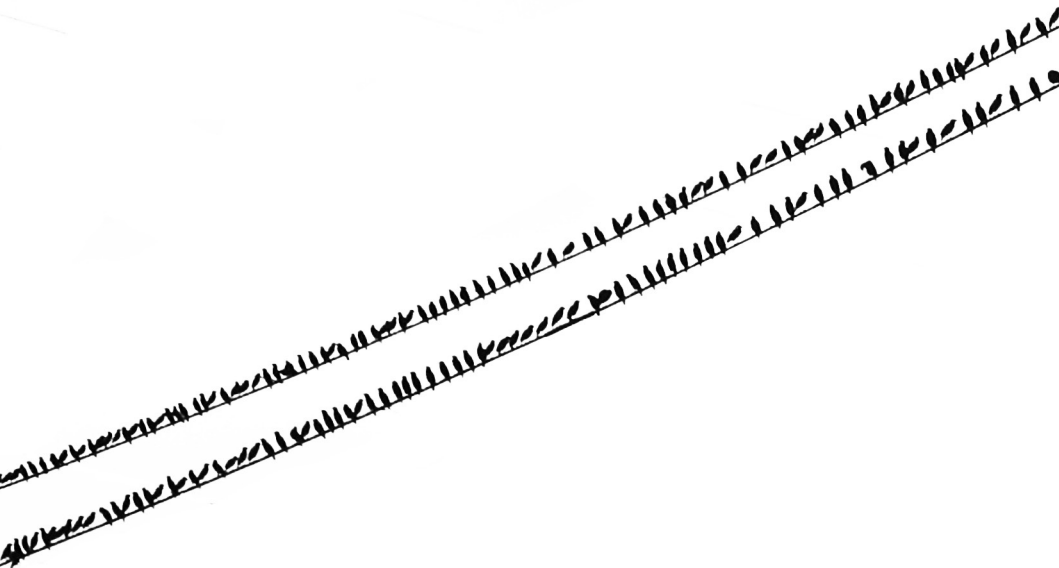
Additionally, our results also indicated that, in the creative industries, innovation is a by-product of personal passion, not a specific goal. This seems counter-intuitive for most research on innovation, as in many other sectors, innovation is well-defined, intentional and pursued (Caves, 2000; Pratt & Gornostaeva, 2009). How does this relate to for example open innovation (Chesbrough, 2003), collaborative innovation (Blomqvist & Levy, 2006) and the idea that innovation should have impact in order to be relevant and socially accepted (e.g. Mulgan, 2006)? These findings can also be relevant for social entrepreneurship and innovation research. For social entrepreneurs – those who *"undertake[n] to discover, define, and exploit opportunities in order to enhance social wealth by creating new ventures or managing existing organisations in an innovative manner"* (Zahra, Gedajlovic, Neubaum, & Shulman, 2009, p. 522) – innovation too is a means to reach

a certain purpose (Hockerts & Wüstenhagen, 2010): offering creative solutions to social problems (Zahra et al., 2009). As social entrepreneurs rely heavily on their innovativeness, future research could assess whether the four sources of innovation addressed in this research also hold for this group.

On a more practical level, clusters stakeholders, including for example co-working hosts (J. Brown, 2017; Merkel, 2015), may use this typology for developing a broad range of inputs for their members in order to stimulate the local innovative climate. Creative entrepreneurs seeking to expand their markets, develop new products or services, or new methods of production (e.g. Schumpeter, 1934), may use it for guidance in increasing their entrepreneurial and innovative activities. Policy makers, research institutes and universities may benefit by strengthening their institutional ties and in developing a local innovative milieu (Camagni, 1995; Maillat, 1998).

Part II

Social interaction and innovation



Chapter 4

“A professional playground”

Collegiality, tacit knowledge and innovation in

shared creative workplaces

INTRODUCTION³⁸

The creative and cultural industries are often hurraed for their innovative capacities and their contribution to the knowledge economy (Florida, 2002; Garnham, 2005). Yet, as the previous chapters explained, how such innovations come about, and how knowledge diffuses is difficult to determine (Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009; Wijngaarden et al., 2019b). Innovation in the creative industries is often considered not a technological big bang, but rather a *field of innovation*, which is impacted by technology, regulation, organisation and situatedness in space and time (Pratt & Gornostaeva, 2009). It also tends to be much more of a by-product of creative production, as well as very contextual in its occurrence – newness is rarely universal (Wijngaarden et al., 2019b).

Such ‘on the job’ innovation, the ‘everyday problem solving’ leading to small innovations that eventually afford new products and services, is especially distinctive for creative work (Green et al., 2007; Scott, 1999). In order to understand such practices of innovation, looking at micro-interactions in the creative and cultural industries is crucial (Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009). By these interactions, Pratt and Jeffcutt (2009) refer to exchanges that cut the boundaries of formal and informal, commercial and non-commercial, and interactions between different fields in arts and culture. This research aims to further the understanding of such micro-interactions and innovation by means of a qualitative study of eight co-working spaces in The Netherlands.

Ever since the late 1990s, a significant share of the innovation literature has taken a macro-perspective, forwarding the concept of ‘clusters’ and their innovative milieus (Cooke & Lazeretti, 2008; O’Connor, 2004; Porter, 1998; Pratt, 1997; Shefer & Frenkel, 1998). Building upon the work of Sassen (1994) and Castells (1996), especially the urban regions were considered the powerhouses of such new economies (O’Connor, 2004). Clusters, agglomerations of interconnected com-

38 This chapter is conditionally accepted in *Geoforum* (co-authored with Erik Hitters and Pawan V. Bhansing).

panies or institutions in a particular field (Porter, 2000), were thought to provide benefits in reducing transaction costs, reinforcing transactional modes of social solidarity and accelerating the circulation of capital and information (Scott, 2000). Especially the latter two have sparked abundant research on project ecologies (Grabher, 2004), trust (Banks et al., 2000; Ettlinger, 2003; Turok, 2003), creative fields (Scott, 1999, 2010) and 'buzz' (Asheim et al., 2007; Storper & Venables, 2004).

Nonetheless, in recent years, we have witnessed a renewed interest in clustering on the micro-level in the emergence of co-working spaces, rising from 8900 of such spaces worldwide to a projected 22400 by the end of 2019 (DESKMAG, 2019). Many of such workplaces have been specifically targeting creative labourers as their audience. For researchers interested in the development and diffusion of innovative practices, such places allow a more structural assessment of how innovation on a micro-level may or may not occur. Not surprisingly, many of the concepts derived from the (creative) clustering literature are applied to co-working spaces without much hesitation (Fiorentino, 2018). Contrary to the clustering discourse culminating nearly two decades ago, which usually covered entire regions or cities, the agglomeration in co-working spaces demonstrates the working of such forces on the individual level. While face-to-face knowledge exchange of labourers has always been considered a source of innovation (Porter, 2000), such interactions are even more influential in situations where an individual often equals the firm (in e.g. freelance work, which is the most prevalent form of creative industries labour organisation in The Netherlands (Koops & Rutten, 2017)). Similarly, co-location strongly influences backward and forward linkages, access to pools of specialised knowledge and labour, and the development of flows of relevant information stimulating knowledge spill-overs (Storper & Venables, 2004). Nevertheless, how and whether such concepts apply in much smaller settings remains an unresolved question.

We propose that by studying such flows of information and face-to-face interactions and collaborations, we will gain a better

understanding of agglomeration economies on a micro-level, as well as the foundations of innovation in the creative industries. Moreover, even though research on co-working spaces is growing, whether (and how) such co-working indeed leads to knowledge sharing and potentially innovation is unclear. Indeed, current research suggests that co-working does not necessarily lead to collaborative practices, knowledge spillovers and innovation (Fuzi, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012). Therefore, based on in-depth interviews with users and managers of Dutch co-working spaces, we aim to answer the question whether and how co-working and co-location, on the micro-level, stimulates interactions, collaborations and potentially innovation in the creative industries. A more rigorous exploration of such exchanges and interactions will generate a better understanding of the practices of co-located work in the creative industries, as well as the possibilities to strengthen the innovative capabilities of this field.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Locality and the importance of face-to-face contact

The co-working hype has strong roots in the cluster discourse that emerged in the early 2000s. Influential here has been especially the work of Porter (2000), who defined clusters as “*geographic concentrations of interconnected companies, specialised suppliers, service providers, firms in related industries, and associated institutions (e.g. universities, standards agencies, trade associations) in a particular field that compete but also co-operate*” (p. 15). According to Porter (2000), one of the main reasons why clusters facilitate economic growth and innovation is through face-to-face contact among labourers. Such physical interactions may stimulate the formation of new businesses and trustful relationships (see also Urry, 2002). Moreover, such contacts are thought to facilitate a dynamic atmosphere that spurs innovation, lures talent, attracts investment and generates growth through a self-reinforcing endogenous process (Turok, 2003), and helps creative workers develop lan-

guages, rites and other code keys for communication (Lorenzen & Frederiksen, 2008). Social proximity, therefore, enhances interactive processes allowing knowledge exchange (tacit and codified), collective learning and innovation (Bassett, Griffiths, & Smith, 2002; Malmberg et al., 2005).

These social aspects – mutual trust, face-to-face contacts and shared language as building blocks of innovation – indicate that modern developments such as the ‘weightless economy’ or ‘the end of geography’ (Pratt, 1997, 2000) and the increasing individualisation, atomisation and isolation of creative work (McRobbie, 2016) have not obviated the need for co-presence and social interactions (Storper & Venables, 2004; Urry, 2002). The value added through potential of the ‘untraded interdependencies’ of sharing of knowledge, norms and practices (Storper, 1995) is widely acknowledged in economic and cultural geography (Boggs & Rantisi, 2003).

Especially in the creative industries, conceivably caused by the highly insecure nature of these industries, the local community and networks are paramount for professional and creative success (Gill & Pratt, 2008; Hesmondhalgh, 2012; Neff et al., 2005). Indeed, the creative industries are associated with an exceptional dependency on local cultures and networks, relying more than other industries on ‘sticky’ places (O’Connor, 2004). However, such an ‘affective community’ or a ‘place to be’ (Pratt, 2000) cannot be seen as an instant panacea for innovation. Despite the focus on (formal) knowledge exchange, the promises of community are more often a reason for co-working than the networking opportunities (J. Brown, 2017). In fact, many studies confirm that non-transaction-based interaction occurs more frequently than for example buyer-supplier relations in clusters (Keeble, Lawson, Moore, & Wilkinson, 1999; De Propriis, 2002; Malmberg et al., 2005).

Tacit knowledge and learning processes

Especially for workers in the creative industries, uncertain social and economic conditions for many – particularly freelance – workers forces them to advance and exhibit their entrepreneur-

ialism (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Bridgstock & Cunningham, 2016; Butcher, 2018; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010). Yet, such (entrepreneurial) skills are not self-evident and often only taught superficially (if at all) in artistic or creative industries education (Bridgstock, 2013; Oakley, 2014; Raffo, O'Connor, Lovatt, & Banks, 2000). Much of this knowledge is therefore acquired tacitly. Such tacit knowledge refers to the form of knowledge famously described by Polanyi (1967) as “[w]e can know more than we can tell” [italics in original text] (p. 4). It incorporates procedural knowledge conveyed through practice, observation and sharing. Tacit knowledge is transferred only through face-to-face interactions (Lundvall, 1992) between partners who already share some basic similarities, such as languages, codes and personal knowledge (either formal or informal) (Nonaka, 1994). This in turn builds trust, which further facilitates the flow of (tacit) knowledge (Asheim & Gertler, 2005).

Proximity, by means of the circulation of tacit knowledge, allows for the diffusion of best practices, which potentially increases the competitiveness and innovativeness of places and creative workers (Capdevila, 2013). Co-locating and subsequent informal interactions afford such learning and the development of entrepreneurial social capital (Alacovska, 2018; Butcher, 2018; Gandini, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012). Not surprisingly, therefore, tacit knowledge takes a central argument in the clustering discourse, as serendipitously acquired, locally embedded, ‘sticky’ skills and know-how (cf. Comunian & England, 2019) are considered to provide competitive advantages in learning and innovation. This idea has especially resonated in the creative industries, which are, even more than other sectors, associated with learning-by-doing, intuitive work and a lack of organisational and institutional support (O'Connor, 2004; Olma, 2016; Rae, 2004; Raffo et al., 2000).

Obviously, tacit knowledge is more easily acquired in a ‘buzzing’ environment and project ecologies (Grabher, 2002b). Especially since the emergence of concepts as the creative class (Florida, 2002) and the urban turn (Asheim et al., 2007), this idea of ‘buzz’ has become increasingly popular in economic ge-

ography. Through such social structures, actors contribute to and benefit from the diffusion of information, gossip and news by just 'being there' (Bathelt et al., 2004, p. 20). It also allows imitation and increased competition (Storper & Venables, 2004), which are important incentives for innovation and differentiation (Porter, 1998). Especially in the creative industries, 'buzz' is considered to be crucial for knowledge exchange because they are, more than most other industries, dependent upon tacit knowledge in terms of production, and social networks in finding suitable project-members (Asheim et al., 2007).

Yet, little is known about the specific nature and practices of such learning and knowledge exchange in the creative industries, e.g. how and which knowledge is exchanged (Cohendet, Grandadam, Simon, & Capdevila, 2014; Pratt, 2014; J. Brown, 2017), how are entrepreneurial or creative skills acquired (Butcher, 2018; Rae, 2004; Raffo et al., 2000), and under which conditions does this occur? Especially because simply co-location alone may not always stimulate such interactions and collaborations, curation is thought to be essential for stimulating collaborative and innovative efforts (J. Brown, 2017; Fuzi, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Parrino, 2015).

Community and collegiality

Tacit knowledge is thought to be exchanged intensively in communities of practice (Amin & Roberts, 2008; J. S. Brown & Duguid, 1991; Wenger, 1999). Membership of such communities requires participation in everyday practices, local social relations and activities (Handley, Clark, Fincham, & Sturdy, 2007). It goes beyond 'being there' (Gertler, 1995), but also concerns the learning the essential roles and performances (Goffman, 1959). Yet, much of the communities of practice literature focusses on small groups united by a common skill or task, including sustained mutual relationships, knowledge of the knowledge of others, local stories and inside jokes, a shared discourse, jargon and rapid flows of information (Amin & Roberts, 2008).

Co-located independent creative workers, who pay a fee to a space provider in exchange for a workplace and socialities

that they would otherwise have no access to (Butcher, 2018), fit the description of communities of practice partly, yet not fully. Co-working lacks the institutionalised long-lived, apprenticeship-based ties of what Amin & Roberts (2008) call craft-based communities, the prolonged periods of education and training of professional communities and the weak social ties of epistemic or creative communities. However, the epistemic communities, building upon reputational and trust based social ties and temporary coalitions from a variety of epistemic fields (Amin & Roberts, 2008), share some overlap with the learning and collaboration in co-working spaces.

Co-working in its ideal-typical form, nevertheless, revolves around community (Spinuzzi et al., 2019). Co-working spaces are specifically designed not to increase productivity or to foster project collaboration (Garrett et al., 2017), but instead,,, such co-working communities are considered to go beyond formal interactions and collaborations. Many practices have a non-economic and informal nature (Alacovska, 2018), and co-working spaces are a formal organisation intentionally providing access to such informality to its members (Blagoev et al., 2019). Especially in precarious conditions, workers tend to work ‘relationally’ and in collective solidarity, drawing upon informal, interpersonal and meaningful efforts (Vidaillet & Bousalham, 2018) and more altruistic and collegial motives (Alacovska, 2018). This ties in with the work of Ross (2003) on post-Fordist work practices in IT workplaces around the turn of the century, which he considered especially ‘collegial’ (though not necessarily *just*).

Spinuzzi et al. (2019) describe such a co-working community drawing upon the work of Tönnies (1963) and Adler, Kwon, & Heckscher (2007) as a ‘third’ organisational form besides *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*. Such a *Collaborative community* is oriented towards mutual understanding and trust and cross-disciplinary and collaborative work. However, contrary to many of the claims in the co-working discourse (Gandini, 2015; Parrino, 2015), in many of the cases in their study, *Gesellschaft* oriented logics, market-oriented, individualist and rational-legally justified, were more dominant than the collaborative logic (Spinuzzi

et al., 2019). This evidently raises the question how communal and collegial co-working spaces – in practice – actually are.

Co-presence and collaboration on the micro-level

The physical configuration of co-working spaces and other forms of shared workplaces allow the development of ‘co-present interaction’, which is fundamental to social intercourse. Such co-presence provides access to rich conversations, including facial gestures, expressions, body language, intonation, silences, turn-taking practices, anticipation (Friedland & Boden, 1994). This social environment, the emergent urban entrepreneurial style (Fiorentino, 2018) and the proximity of peers for collaboration and exchange are key in fostering creativity and professional success, with collaboration being an inter-organisational way of managing a complex work environment. Such collaboration too is related to creativity, forwarding the idea collaboration is far from a coping mechanism of those with limited creative skills (Loots, Cnossen, & van Witteloostuijn, 2018).

Hence, looking into micro-interactions enables us to provide empirical foundations for the more structural theoretical assumptions behind knowledge exchange and innovative practices in creative workplaces. Concepts from social geography, sociology or economics, such as ‘buzz’ or ‘creative work’, are considered as aggregates of micro-phenomena that are interpreted as macro-summaries (see e.g. the work on micro-strategies and entrepreneurial identities and macro social formations of Reveley & Down, 2009). Yet, past theoretical models in economic geography or creative labour studies have had difficulties in accounting for such social ties on the micro-level (Boggs & Rantisi, 2003), or the daily practices of informal work (Alacovska, 2018). Similarly, as explained in Chapter 1, where individual creativity and innovativeness are widely studied (e.g. Amabile, 1996; Hirst, Van Knippenberg, & Zhou, 2009; Tierney, Farmer, & Graen, 1999), much less is known about the micro-level in relation to the clustering literature that historically concentrated on the regional (macro) and organisational (meso) level (Capdevila, 2013).

Capdevila (2013) considers co-working spaces a form of micro clusters, similar to the industrial cluster, yet, at a smaller level. In this, co-working spaces can be considered an alternative ‘middleground’ (Cohendet et al., 2010) that connects the ‘uperground’, larger, formal organisations and institutions that focus on exploiting creative work, and the ‘underground’, the creative individuals (Capdevila, 2013, 2015). Instead of taking the firm as the unit of analysis, such an approach fits the most prominent organisational form in the creative industries: that of the individual creative worker (Hesmondhalgh, 2012; Koops & Rutten, 2017). This allows for extrapolating the cluster literature to that of the co-working spaces, leading to a micro-level analysis. Capdevila (2013) indicates that such places enable the transfer of knowledge along members, mainly committing to relations with fellow co-workers and thereby refraining from the competitive mode of work. This raises the question how the knowledge dynamics of cluster theory manifest in co-working spaces, and especially how an ‘industrial atmosphere’ (Marshall, 1919) can be studied in today’s Post-Fordist collaborative workplaces (Capdevila, 2013).

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

Research setting: creative co-working and co-location in The Netherlands

This research focusses on eight of this dissertation’s sample of (collective) creative workplaces in The Netherlands: Belcanto in Haarlem, BINK36 in The Hague, Creative Factory in Rotterdam, De Gruyter Fabriek in Den Bosch, Klein Haarlem in Haarlem, De Vasim in Nijmegen, Dutch Game Garden in Utrecht and Strijp-S in Eindhoven. These workplaces are highly different in many respects. Relevant for this research are openness and community management (See Table 5), as both potentially influence the quantity and quality of knowledge exchange and interactions in particular places. Scoring High on Openness refers to sharing an office, while Low refers to separate offices

behind mostly closed doors. Community management refers to the involvement of the places’ managers, hosts or staff in stimulating collaboration, collective activities or organising drinks or lunches. The figures in Table 1 are based on interviews with users, in which we asked about the respondents’ locations’ openness and community management.

Table 5: Characteristics of cases

Location	Openness	Community management
<i>Belcanto</i>	Low	Low
<i>BINK36</i>	Low	Low
<i>Creative Factory</i>	High	Medium
<i>De Gruyter Fabriek</i>	Low	Medium
<i>Klein Haarlem</i>	High	High
<i>De Vasim</i>	Medium	Medium
<i>Dutch Game Garden</i>	Medium	High
<i>Strijp-S</i>	Medium	Medium

Data collection and analysis

This research is built on participant observations in the eight locations, the first and second cycle in-depth interviews as described in Chapter 1, and the interviews with the co-working space managers. Respondents were, among other topics, inquired about their daily practices in their workplaces, the networks in- and outside their locations, the activities they organised and participated in, their interactions with other creatives and their (prospected) collaborations. The locations’ managers were asked about their experiences and choices in fostering interaction and cooperation among creative workers, and interactions between managers and workers. All interviews were recorded and transcribed to allow qualitative analysis. Finally, we conducted one month of participatory fieldwork in one particular location, Klein Haarlem, as well as approximately twenty days in the other locations in order to immerse ourselves in the daily practices of creative work (Emerson et al., 2011).

In coding, we took a grounded theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) based approach in the sense that, despite our interest in the micro-aspects of cluster theory related concepts, we aimed to derive our analytic categories not from these preconceived concepts, but rather from the data (Charmaz, 2001). The pilot interviews were analysed descriptively in order to determine relevant themes to follow up on as well as to develop a provisional topic list. For the first ten interviews, the data was coded using initial coding in order to continue on gathering an exhaustive list of codes and to capture as many ideas as possible (Friese, 2012; Saldaña, 2012). Again, these codes were clustered in what we considered summarising concepts, such as formal and informal collaboration, perceptions of collegiality and competition. In the later interviews as well as the field notes based on the ethnographic fieldwork, we proceeded with holistic coding in order to further develop the key themes for this research, focussing on the most salient patterns. Codes were then collected for closer scrutiny by rereading and recoding whole corpus, and further explored through nested coding (Saldaña, 2012). By a combination of exploring recurring topics, similarities and differences, theory-related material and indigenous typologies (Ryan & Bernard, 2003), the three overarching themes were defined: 1] collaborative and learning practices 2] co-location as overcoming the perks of solitary work, and 3] tensions caused by co-location.

RESULTS

Collaboration, (tacit) knowledge exchange and (entrepreneurial) learning

While collaboration was not a daily practice for most respondents, the vast majority confirmed to interact with their co-located peers, and often was also reaching out for collaboration. Typically, this collaboration was informal, although formal cooperation was not exceptional. The reasons for formally collaborating within their local workplace can be categorised in three

motives. First, for many respondents, working on a project with people close by is a matter of convenience, resembling an alternative form of reduced transaction costs (Porter, 2000). For example, Jessica [Arts and antiques] argued that it is very helpful to be “*close to the source*”, because “*You can get contacts anywhere, but it is incredibly nice to have [contacts] in your immediate area. It’s like a bakery two towns away; eventually you’ll stop going to that bakery*”.

For others, it was not only convenient, but also a matter of working with the people you know. Especially for project-based working, respondents use networks to find the right people for the right job. Meeting people frequently ensures that they stay in the ‘awareness space’ (Grabher, 2004), remaining close to their peers and competitors. This proximity thus served not only as a means to collaborate, but also indirectly afforded more subtle benefits. Interacting and observing others allows the possibility to check potential partners’ reliability and potentially builds trust. Banks, Lovatt, O’Connor & Raffo (2000) argue that trust is of high importance in project based work in the creative industries. This is also visible in the narratives of the Dutch creative workers, stating, for example, that the closer they are to others, the easier it is to get recommendations, and the safer your choice for potential collaboration. Evidently, remaining in this ‘awareness space’ also allowed them to stay informed about relevant changes and developments in their field.

Finally, formal collaboration took the form of informal reciprocity. Some respondents enjoyed forwarding work to others that were in the same situation because they felt like they could identify with them as peers. In many locations, especially those that were more community oriented, we observed an informal market in projects and gigs (cf. Alacovska, 2018), with informal favour swapping and volunteering being a day-to-day practice. Regularly, the size of the project was a decisive factor in such exchanges: “*the ‘larger guys’ passed a project, they said that it was too small for them, and perhaps it’s something for us.*” [Louis, Design]. While in other cases it was related to knowledge and specialisation. The more open locations in this study afforded such forms of collaboration more often than the cases in which the

creatives tended to work in more closed offices and studios. Inward and outward contracting – the exchange of paid business assignments – however, though occurring occasionally, was not frequent (similar to the findings of Ebbers, 2013). We also witnessed a few cases in which several co-located workers decided to present themselves under one flag to other firms and clients, in order to win projects that would have otherwise been out of their reach.

Nevertheless, formal collaboration usually remained very practical, with only little knowledge exchange that would potentially spark innovative practices involved. Informal collaboration, conversely, was more prevalent and relevant. Especially substantive feedback and content-based informal collaboration were mentioned in the interviews. Many respondents explained that they often got ‘stuck’ in their creative work, and needed someone to vent their problems to, or to give them creative and/or entrepreneurial advice. Charlie [Film, video and photography] stated that:

“I find it very important not to work on my own. I like to interact with other people. Sometimes you can get stuck in circle thoughts, and then it is nice to be able to talk about it. And when someone reacts, and makes you see things from a different side, I like that.”

Later on, Charlie also explained how seeing things from this ‘different side’ helped her in developing her own creative niche and approach. Co-working, here, clearly served the goal of learning everyday entrepreneurial practices and facilitated the ongoing development of a professional identity (Butcher, 2018).

Additionally, many respondents noted that they contacted other creatives in their vicinity in order to discuss the business aspects of creative work. In line with the findings of Hennekam & Bennett’s (2016) quantitative study of creative entrepreneurs in the Netherlands, creative workers argued that such aspects were often lacking in their creative education. Justin [Digital and entertainment media], for example, asks the larger companies for advice:

“[These questions are] indeed mainly business stuff, like eh... we have this game... Do we have to make it free to play or do we need it, are we going to sell it for ten euros or something? What do you think works best?”

Here, co-working spaces served as an intermediary affording mentoring or master-apprentice relationships that would otherwise not occur.

This indicates that the ‘social reskilling’ (Winkel, Gielen, & Zwaan, 2012) from more creative to entrepreneurial capabilities (Loots & Witteloostuijn, 2018) evidently is taking place in such collaborative workplaces, and that this allowed access to essential yet tacit knowledge (see also Comunian & England, 2019). With precariousness and self-exploitation being especially prevalent among young creative workers (Banks & Hesmondhalgh, 2009; Bridgstock & Cunningham, 2016; Gill & Pratt, 2008; Hennekam & Bennett, 2016; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010), access to tacit knowledge helped in the transition period from graduation to entrepreneurial success. The co-working spaces therefore afforded not only their users’ professional development and innovative practices, but also mitigated the limited training creative graduates have received in business skills (Bridgstock & Cunningham, 2016). It also ties in with the notion of the ‘entrepreneurialisation of the self’ (Rossi, 2017; see also e.g. Bröckling, 2015), reconciling the ongoing individualisation and community values.

Working alone, with ‘colleagues’

Collective workplace users and artists working in community settings confirmed to be exposed to a continuous ‘buzz’ of information, gossip, norms and practices. This ‘buzz’ is highly important for creative workers and artists (cf. Asheim et al., 2007; Storper & Venables, 2004), because according to them, “you cannot do it just on your own” [Monique, Arts and antiques; Louis, Design and Tom, Design]. Hearing other peoples’ ideas, opinions and perspectives is a disruptive force that introduces new approaches and ideas to existing habits and methods, and

learning by seeing other people work, some respondents argued, helped them in their own professional development. Monique [Arts and antiques] explains this exposure to new ideas in the following way:

“You inspire each other. You go outside, smoke a cigarette, and sit next to someone you don’t know who’s also working in this building, and turns out to do something with really strange technological things and machines. And then you start thinking, and you think ‘oh, this machine can do this, or that’, and you start talking and you give each other advice, you get together, and that grows.”

An important catalyst for such community-driven exchanges can be found in playfulness (see also Clare, 2013; Cohendet & Simon, 2007). For example, one of the locations used to have a table tennis table. This table was recently removed; and all of the respondents complained that their practices of social interaction were disturbed. They argued that, when they were stressed or ‘stuck’ in a creative process, they asked others to play table tennis with them. This makes the workplace a *“professional playground”* [James, Music and visual and performing arts]. Similarly, drinks are also a prime event for picking up the ‘buzz’. In all locations, drinks were organised for tenants and other interested creatives. Most respondents indicated that, whenever time allowed, they participated in these drinks; not only for the (free) beer, but also in order to get to meet their neighbours and other creatives. Julia [Music and visual and performing arts] explained this by saying that, *“as a freelancer, you’re always on your own. You need the social aspects, which you can find during these drinks.”* Similar to the findings of Spinuzzi (2012), many enjoyed the social interactions, even if they did not lead to any formal or informal collaboration – indeed, such places tended to solve the paradoxical situation for creative workers of ‘lonerism’ on the one hand, and the desire for peer recognition on the other (Lorenzen & Frederiksen, 2008).

Confirming Spinuzzi et al.’s (2019) statement that *“coworking is about community”*, freelancers use co-working spaces in order to

compensate for the challenges of self-employed creative work, most prominently the continuous intermingling of home, work and leisure, as well as the solitude that comes with such forms of labour organisation (Blagoev et al., 2019; Merkel, 2015). Social contact in co-working spaces thus functions as a form of ‘surrogate’ collegiality; with more organisational social logics than third places, but being more bohemian and informal than traditional offices (Alacovska, 2018; Blagoev et al., 2019).

Indeed, many of the (freelance) respondents referred to their co-located creative peers in this collegial context, for instance alike *“colleagues from the departments of finance and marketing know each other from day-to-day interactions and drinks, but do not deal with each other on a daily basis”* [Sander, Digital and entertainment media]. It’s like being from the same town, Jessica [Arts and antiques] argues, *“when you enter this place, you begin waving, because you know a lot of people, just like a town”*. And in this place, people care for each other, *“when we are not feeling well, this is discussed with our ‘neighbours’. We really laugh and cry together”* [Kathryn, Designer fashion]. These ‘colleagues’ offer a cure to the feeling of being *“alone in the world”*, when *“all your friends have normal jobs, you know, everyone has just a job”* while as a creative worker, you live a different life [Mark, Software and electronic publishing]. Timothy [Advertising] even argues that there is nothing lonely about working alone in a co-working building, in fact, he considers it *“less lonely than in a company in which a manager is continuously pressuring you to work harder”*.

As will be explained more in-depth in the next chapter, a major incentive to collegial behaviour can be found in the practical obstacles of day-to-day work. Claire [Design] described that she shared groceries with a group of co-working ‘colleagues’: *“Basically we have a shopping list and everyone contributes to the housekeeping, so one person does weekly shopping and then we put it here on the table for lunch”*. Often, such lunches and practical discussions ended in forms of feedback and tacit-knowledge exchange, helping each other with WordPress issues or venting situations like the one Michelle [Digital and entertainment media] vividly highlights:

“Just a talk at the coffee machine, sometimes you’ve got these questions, things that are not going well, someone not paying... how you deal with that? Just to vent your problems, like damn it, I don’t know how to handle it”.

These forms of “*sense-making and reflective dialogue*” (Comunian, 2017, p. 2) in which individuals develop a form of peer feedback and reflection, can only become fruitful in situations in which a shared sense of collegiality is developed (J. Brown, 2017). Collegiality is also thought to increase inspiration, especially in the smaller firms of the creative industries which are in a continuous balancing act between artistic and commercial imperatives (D. Jacobs, 2012; Loots & Witteloostuijn, 2018). These findings therefore indicate that collegiality is key to the often-cited qualities such as ‘buzz’, collaboration and knowledge exchange. Yet, the mere co-locating of creatives does not automatically breed such qualities. In fact, the overlap between the group and individual yields its own paradoxical conditions that are rarely addressed in the existing literature.

Tensions between individual work and group consolidation

Even though it occurred regularly, knowledge exchange and local practices of innovation, especially in the form of formal collaboration, were not as prevalent as many of the managers and ‘residents’ hoped and expected to see. In fact, the lack of community and collaboration was considered a challenge that managers aimed to solve by organising events, designing ‘collective’ spaces for relaxation or by clustering similar (in work or personality) tenants/members. Most prominently, this lack in collaboration and knowledge exchange was caused by respondents having an already existing network elsewhere, as well as very little time to invest in building a new or enlarging their existing network. Especially for older firms, collaboration was less frequent. Some were even critical of organised networking: *“I wonder whether organising drinks stimulates [cooperation]. [...] [B]ecause yes, you need to invest your own time and such, and at this moment, that is just very costly”* Bjorn [Advertising].

Others, however, had an entirely different reason for not engaging in such local collaborations: they refrained from having business relationships with people they would meet in their personal sphere because *“at home, you don’t sleep with your neighbour either”* [Marcus, Advertising]. While appreciating having collegial contact with their neighbouring creative workers, they did not want the risk of spoiling this relationship with potential business conflicts, as Alex [Film, video and photography] argues:

“Yes, the moment it becomes personal, I find it difficult to stay business-like. And eh, when you meet the next day and you’re in a conflict about fees, I am just not like that, my character is not suited for that. I am a softy.”

The ‘compulsory sociality’ (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010) of such settings, for them, hampered their willingness to engage in the informal or formal market for collaborative work (Cockayne, 2016).

Others observed other difficulties, for example, by doing tasks for free, such as designing a flyer or taking a quick photograph, mainly because they would feel uncomfortable asking money for this. For them, the local informal barter economy, in which spatial closeness was reflected in lower economic benefits, was hard to navigate (Alacovska, 2018). Similarly, like Claire [Design] argued: *“We try to keep [giving feedback] quite open, because you want honest feedback, but the more you become friends, the more difficult is to be very honest and direct”*. She also indicated that the diffusing boundaries between friends and co-workers have led to quite some tensions within her co-working space. For many, primarily informal collaboration – or what we call collegiality – was more appropriate and often more fruitful than embarking on innovative projects together.

A healthy balance in diversity was important in cultivating the potential for knowledge exchange and innovations. Such a balance, according to the respondents, concerns both personal and professional characteristics. Sander [Digital and entertainment media], for example, explains how similarities in attitude are paramount for allowing successful social cohesion:

“[Having the] same kind of people [creatives] is pleasant. Otherwise, people will collide. We don’t want people that want to show that they have high hourly rates [...]. We want to walk around here on our slippers or with skateboards if we want. There are table tennis and a football table, you know, that is important to us. We want to have that.”

On the other hand, Eric [Software and electronic publishing] explained that having too similar mind sets hampers innovation: *“[What leads to innovation] is having multidisciplinary teams. When everyone is looking in different directions, you’ll get new insights”*.

However, in line with the findings of Spinuzzi (2012), rivalry was not uncommon in the competitive creative industries. Nevertheless, many respondents emphasised that direct competition was limited, because, as Julia [Music and visual and performing arts] explained,

“Everyone just does his own thing. Just because they are eh, creatives. [...], [it] comes from the inside, the drive to do these things. So, it would be very coincidental if someone else did exactly the same thing. [...] I don’t think that is the case here”.

Indeed, even within sub-disciplines of the creative industries, firms are very much specialised, which prevents too much overlap with other creatives nearby. Having the right balance in diversity is therefore essential in maintaining an open, yet complementary atmosphere.

“Everyone is in his or her own circle. It doesn’t interfere with the work of others. Sometimes your roads cross, and you notice that you’re both in the same pitch, but in general, no, we’re not stealing each other’s jobs, no, not like that”

clarified Lucas [Music and visual and performing arts]. Yet, for some, it was a thin line between healthy tension and serious competition. Especially among the larger firms also housed in co-working buildings, some respondents observed, doors were

shut. This sometimes disappointed the other workers formerly working next to them: *“When your firm grows, you become more closed. I don’t like that. I hope I won’t be like that in the future”* [Rachel, Design].

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

Innovation in the creative industries has the tendency to occur ‘on the job’ and through ‘everyday problem solving’ (Green, Miles, & Rutter, 2007; Scott, 1999). This research aimed to investigate whether and how interactions between co-located creative workers promoted knowledge spillovers, collaboration and innovation in the creative industries. It also had the ambition to explore how concepts such as ‘buzz’, reduced transaction costs and knowledge spillovers manifest themselves on the micro-level.

Especially in the creative industries, where project ecologies are ubiquitous (Grabher, 2001), knowing who to work, collaborate and hang out with, in terms of specialisations, trustworthiness and matching personalities, is critical. Co-working spaces are an essential tool for building and maintaining such a professional and personal network. We observed that for numerous co-located creative workers, these social promises are essential, for example as a pool of informal exchange of help, advice or goods (cf. the work on creative slack of Cohendet & Simon, 2007). Convenience and physical closeness reduced transaction costs by saving time, effort and by being able to have quick informal face-to-face deliberations. Proximity too stimulated the formation of new businesses and trustful relationships, as creatives remained in their peers’ ‘awareness space’ (Grabher, 2004).

Moreover, respondents in this study also emphasised the ‘buzz’ or ‘industrial atmosphere’ (Marshall, 1919) they experienced in especially third places (Oldenburg, 1989; see also the more recent work of J. Brown, 2017): the coffee machines, smoking areas outside of the buildings, during lunch and around ping-pong tables and other leisure facilities. These places were

considered vital for discussing the state-of-the-art issues and ideas with peers, for staying informed about the latest gossip, and for learning the practices of creative entrepreneurship (cf. the idea of tacit knowledge as discussed by Gertler, 2003; Polanyi, 1967). They also afforded the development and persistence of local barter economies, in which informal help and work is exchanged (Alacovska, 2018). Some respondents underscored that they would not have been successful if they would not have been part of this local creative community. Using the terminology of Granovetter (1983), the results indicate that co-locating does not only grant them access to a web of strong ties, but also to a wider network of weak ties through informal interactions. Though not a daily practice for most respondents, such interactions had the potential to expose the creative workers to innovative new ideas.

Co-working spaces have been conceived and are still perceived as workplaces in which community logics are dominant. Yet Spinuzzi et al. (2019) observed persistent market and economic rational dominance in many of such workplaces. This research partly confirms their findings, as communal values and collaboration are existing, yet not prevailing. However, we propose such social practices could be categorised as ‘surrogate’ collegiality. Though not formally colleagues, co-located creatives have access to local social connections for informal help and social interactions. In a labour market where flexible, precarious freelance work dominates (Gill & Pratt, 2008; Hesmondhalgh, 2012; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010; McRobbie, 2016), on the job training is limited, and in which creative and cultural industries education has not always embraced entrepreneurial skills and values (Bridgstock, 2013; Bridgstock & Cunningham, 2016), the co-working spaces function as a ‘middleground’, not only between formal organisations and creative individuals (Capdevila, 2013, 2015; Cohendet et al., 2010), but also between formal education and creative labour. Such a ‘middleground’ affords entrepreneurial and creative learning (Butcher, 2018), a form of tacit knowledge exchange often concealed as ‘playfulness’ (cf. Ross, 2003).

Yet, the diffusion of such new ideas and skills is not self-evident. A significant number of respondents struggled with the ‘compulsory sociality’ imposed by working in community settings. In a similar vein, the overlap between friendship and professional ties has been a source of tension, both in formal and informal collaboration. Alike Brown (2017), we observed that similarity in culture and values is essential. Proficiency in the role of the ‘creative worker’ too is an important prerequisite for gaining access to knowledge flows and formal or informal collaboration. In other words, the cognitive distance (Nooteboom, 2000) should be limited. It also requires what are often called ‘Jacobs externalities’ (Galliano et al., 2015): interactions between diverse yet complimentary (sub)sectors. Such complementarity is also key in averting rivalry and competition. Even though Porter (1998) argued that this could be an incentive for innovation and differentiation, we observed that once firms grow beyond their original creative niche, the opportunities for knowledge exchange diminished.

The eight case studies – diverse in openness with some being (partly) more traditional co-working spaces and others solitary offices with shared facilities – allow a first exploration of differences between different forms of collective workplaces. Formal collaboration seemed to be first and foremost a matter of personal preferences and histories – it occurred both in places with a lower and higher openness or community management, though it manifested slightly more often and organically in the more open locations (i.e. resembling the traditional co-working spaces). These creative workers were forced to communicate by their proximity to others, strengthening personal ties and mutual trust, whereas for the more closed locations, such collaborations were less common. Finally, we observed that especially in places with an active community management, specifically tacit knowledge exchange was more common, as managers or hosts tended to ‘curate’ the needs of their creative workers (e.g. J. Brown, 2017).

In conclusion, our research corroborates the findings of Fuzi (2015), Merkel (2015) and Spinuzzi (2012) in the claim that co-working as a decisive factor in fostering collaboration and innovation is naive. Our results indicate that formal collaboration is limited, as well is its contribution to radical innovative breakthroughs (e.g. the ‘big bang’ discussed by Pratt & Gornostaeva, 2009). Yet, looking at the micro-level, we learned that proximity is an essential facilitator of potential collaborative prospects. Offering especially help in practical issues, including providing alternative perspectives on creative work as well as the transfer of for example administrative or entrepreneurial skills are not considered as explicitly innovative, but they do contribute to a fertile ground aiding optimal personal creative and professional development. Such collegiality is unique for freelance creative workers, and provides a pool of ample (tacit) knowledge that has a potential of indirectly promoting innovative new products, methods of production, markets or forms of organisation (Schumpeter, 1934).

Finally, this chapter has included a diverse selection of creative collective workplaces in the Netherlands. Even though it aimed to shed light on some of the differences between the eight locations, future research could do a more rigorous comparison of certain types of workplaces (Fuzi, 2015; Weijs-Perée et al., 2019) in order to investigate their success in fostering innovation. This would include the distinction between more homogenous and heterogeneous groups of creative workers, more open and closed settings, the configuration of knowledge bases, the presence or absence of incubation programmes and the focus on the creative industries (as creative workers are distinct in motivation and growth opportunities, see e.g. Loots & Witteloostuijn, 2018). Similarly, although existing research (e.g. Merkel, 2015, which includes Berlin, New York and London) indicates little difference between countries, cross-national comparative research could confirm whether the results of this study would indeed also be applicable to other countries.

Chapter 5

Performed boundaries in co-working spaces

*Interaction rituals as facilitators of knowledge exchange
and innovation in creative work*

INTRODUCTION

Innovation and the cultural and creative industries have often been considered to be two sides of the same coin, both in the assumption that these industries are pioneering the new innovative information economy (Cooke & De Propriis, 2011) as well as by the idea that they, innately, produce R&D (Lash & Urry, 1994; Potts, 2007). Yet, as explained in Chapter 2, the interpretation of innovation in this context is inherently elusive, with traditional approaches to – and measures of – innovation only rarely capturing the work processes in the cultural and creative industries (Wijngaarden et al., 2019b).

This chapter resurfaces the question of where innovation comes from in the creative industries. From the *macro-level perspective*, there is a broad school of thought, especially from economic geography, that considers innovation from a spatial context – or *place* and *peers* as introduced in Chapter 3. Much of this work refers explicitly to the creative industries as sectors either benefitting from co-locating or having an overall stronger tendency to flock together (Bathelt & Cohendet, 2014; Capone & Lazzeretti, 2018; Lazzeretti et al., 2014; Lee & Drever, 2013; Malmberg et al., 2005). Yet, how this co-location might indeed benefit creative workers on the individual level – and how this mechanism actually works – has been more difficult to unravel.

Recently, the interest in micro-level approaches to the effects of co-location has soared, with a growing body of research articulating its interest in the effect of *bodily co-presence* and interactions on innovation (Capdevila, 2015; Clifton, Füzi, & Loudon, 2019; Moriset, 2013; Schmidt et al., 2014; Wijngaarden et al., 2019b). Especially in the cultural and creative industries, looking at these micro-scale interactions of the individual, micro-firms or communities can provide insights in understanding innovation, as in these sectors, innovation is much more difficult to measure in quantitative proxies (Capdevila, 2015; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009; Wijngaarden et al., 2019b). The recent rise of co-working spaces too promoted the idea that knowledge-exchange and innovation are spatialised and occur in micro-interactions between individual workplace users (Capdevila, 2015).

This notion of co-working is progressively transforming into a buzzword similar to Florida's 'creative class' hype almost two decades ago (Gandini, 2015) or the emergence of clusters most notably represented by Porter (1998), with the number of co-working spaces worldwide rising dramatically. Important in the context of this research is that co-working spaces are – in their ideal-typical form – geared towards fostering collaboration and innovation for their users (e.g. Moriset, 2013; Schmidt et al., 2014; Waters-Lynch et al., 2016). However, similar to comparable buzzwords designating collective workplaces such as creative hubs and incubators (Schmidt et al., 2014), a coherent and systematic analysis is lagging (J. Brown, 2017). Intensive research in this field is only gradually emerging (e.g. J. Brown, 2017; Capdevila, 2013; Fuzi, 2015; Gandini, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012) and often focussing on their top-down organisation, e.g. the hosts or facilities of such places (J. Brown, 2017; Merkel, 2015; Weijs-Perrée et al., 2019).

Co-working spaces allow a renewed interest in studies of micro-interactions, not only those geared towards the conscious, planned and formal forms of communication, but also evoking stronger attentiveness towards the mundane, the semi-public and the seemingly 'meaningless' actions of their users (Butcher, 2018; De Vaujany & Aroles, 2018). Yet, there are still some pressing questions in this field. For example, how do these 'collegial' communities in shared workplaces – discussed in the preceding chapter – develop? Moreover, whether (and how) co-working indeed leads to knowledge sharing is unclear, and current research suggests that co-working does not automatically spark collaborative working, or the diffusion of knowledge and innovation (Fuzi, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012). This research aims to approach this question from such a micro-lens.

More specifically, using a qualitative, micro-interactionalist perspective on co-working spaces as a starting point, this chapter untangles the practices and rituals that may eventually afford knowledge exchange. Thus: how do interactions between creative workers – that may contribute to developing a fertile soil for collaboration, knowledge exchange and innovation – occur

in collaborative workplaces? In order to answer this question, I draw upon a classic sociological toolkit: that of symbolic interactionism, and in particular that of interaction rituals and interaction ritual chains as advanced by Goffman (1959, 1963, 1967) and Collins (1981, 2005). After explaining the ethnographic approach of this research, the results will be addressed by concentrating on a dramaturgical inspired analysis of tensions in boundary formation and on codes of conduct, followed by a discussion on rituals facilitating smooth interactions between co-workers. The chapter ends with a conclusion and discussion

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Co-working and innovation in the Post-Fordist economy

As explained in this dissertation's introduction, the co-working space emerged parallel to the economic crisis of the twenty-first century. Co-working has rapidly spread all over the globe as a result of an increasing number of labourers leading a flexible work life³⁹ outside of the traditional second place environments (Oldenburg, 1989). For such freelancers in the knowledge economy – particularly the 'culturepreneurs' (Lange, 2011) whose personal life and work life increasingly conflate (Lazzarato, 2004) and who have increasingly become displaced from physical workplaces (Gill, Pratt, & Virani, 2019) – co-working offers practical advantages including affordable rents, access to facilities and the possibility of social interaction and collaboration. Co-working spaces first emerged in larger urban cities such as San Francisco, Berlin, Amsterdam and Barcelona (J. Brown, 2017), though increasingly also in less metropolitan areas (Fuzi, 2015). In the most minimal form, they offer office-renting facilities with desks and Wi-Fi connections where individuals can work alongside their professional peers (Gandini, 2015).

In its ideal-typical form however, co-working is not solely offering 'working alone, together', it also promotes a normative model that endorses the values of community, collabora-

39 See e.g. the work on increasing flexibilisation by McRobbie (2016).

tion, openness, diversity and sustainability (Gandini, 2015, 2015; Kwiatkowski & Buczynski, 2011; Merkel, 2015). Thus, they differ from other workplaces in the sense that they focus on community building and knowledge and resource sharing dynamics (Capdevila, 2015). Therefore, such locations aim to provide a solution to the professional isolation of freelance work by offering a community that is not found at home (Spinuzzi, 2012) or in other workplaces (Fuzi, 2015). Cooperating with these other (creative) workers can be critical in business development (Spinuzzi, 2012) in providing crucial coordinating functions in connecting networks of individuals and groups (Merkel, 2015; cf. Granovetter, 1983). This makes co-working a strategic step in order to gain access to the required and desired social capital (Gandini, 2015). It too grants the users symbolic capital. In a field in which the self is increasingly understood in economic terms and branding discourses, managing and performing one's professional, entrepreneurial and creative identity as being capable of producing economic and creative values is essential in succeeding as a creative worker and preventing marginalisation, isolation or succumbing to precarious labour conditions (Bandinelli & Gandini, 2019; Gill et al., 2019; McRobbie, 2016).

Similarly, such places – by fostering ‘accelerated serendipity’ (see Moriset, 2013; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017) – offer meaningful interactions with others having similar values yet different and complementary experiences, skills and networks (J. Brown, 2017). In other words: it allows the development of weak ties and as such the diffusion of information beyond the social cliques (Granovetter, 1983). As such, interactions can also be essential for their members’ innovativeness, as it tends to be a challenge to navigate and connect to the potential novel combinations and collaborations offered by the place, city or industry (J. M. Jacobs, 1970; Schumpeter, 1934; Potts & Hartley, 2015). This, again, relies heavily on what Jacobs (1970) mentioned decades ago as the advantage of cities as places of economic and social diversity (cf. Jacobs externalities, see Galliano et al., 2015). Places may stimulate creativity by the highly packed social diversity facilitating haphazard, serendipitous contact and

interactions, or, in the words of Amin & Thrift (2002), they are moments of encounter in which networks collide, fight, engage and cooperate. As such, innovation too has a serendipitous character, and is often shaped by collective practices, interactions or reciprocal influences between project teams, communities and consumer bases (Brandellero & Kloosterman, 2010).

However, existing research highlighted the difficulties in stimulating such interactions, and some authors argued that the co-working hype is much more a bubble than a ‘serendipity machine’ (Gandini, 2015; Moriset, 2013), with research suggesting that the mere physical proximity alone will not necessarily lead to the interactions, collaborations and cross-fertilisation required for innovation (Parrino, 2015). The community facilitators or hosts play a decisive role in the success of knowledge exchange or innovative processes (J. Brown, 2017; Capdevila, 2015; Merkel, 2015). Their mediation or curation consists of initiating events and meetings, such as organised talks, network lunches and seminars that are also inviting potential collaborators from the outside (Capdevila, 2015; Merkel, 2015), or by engaging ‘collaboration tools’ such as brokering knowledge, connecting people and upholding the ‘co-working values’ (J. Brown, 2017). The configurations of the physical space, e.g. the availability of coffee machines, lobbies, open floor plans or kitchens, may also afford interactions and innovation (Capdevila, 2014; Merkel, 2015).

The presence of hosts also serves a different goal. Together with the community, they constitute a ‘co-working culture’. Contrary to corporate culture – inherent to most traditional, Fordist or white-collar organisations in which (future) employees are socialised in the firms’ values and dispositions – freelancers lack a formal socialisation. Co-working culture also shares some characteristics with what Kunda (1993) calls tech or engineering culture, or with what Ross (2003) observes in his fieldwork on new media companies. Nevertheless, contrary to what Kunda and Ross describe, co-working spaces lack the institutionalised cultural company rituals as well as the more hierarchical, managerial structures (despite both new media and

tech firms considering themselves as ‘flat’ or ‘bottom-up’ organised). In co-working spaces therefore, I expect, such forms of (normative) control are much less institutionalised or imposed.

Does this mean that there is no imposed culture in co-working spaces? Research of e.g. Butcher (2018) – also drawing upon ethnographic fieldwork – emphasised how co-workers were socialised in the sense that they, through recurring interactions, had to learn how to behave like a co-worker. In co-working spaces, they learn – through imitation – to absorb and transform the local activities and curation processes, and eventually feel sufficiently empowered to develop collective practices (Butcher, 2018). This indicates that the interactions between co-working members are powerful in diffusing a certain ‘co-working culture’, potentially geared towards knowledge exchange and innovation.

In sum, as Boden and Molotch (1994) stated, co-present interaction remains fundamental to social contact. Such interactions provide a richness in details that is lost in longer distance forms of communication, such as facial gestures, body language, intonation, silences, turn-taking practices and past histories (Urry, 2002). As such, the co-working spaces and creative workplaces are thought to fulfil an important role in overcoming the strains of solitary, such as acquiring new practical skills or relevant knowledge. Yet, stimulating such occurrences of interactions could also be challenging due to e.g. time constraints, dissimilar expectations and potential conflicts and rivalry. This calls for a more in-depth and detailed analysis that examines how the possibilities for knowledge transfer are developed, how creative workers engage with such knowledge environments and how rituals structure these interactions.

Micro-interactions in co-working spaces

Nevertheless, as co-working spaces facilitate random and serendipitous encounters between workers and tenants (Merkel, 2015), this study proposes an analysis inspired by Goffman’s (1959, 1967) dramaturgical and interaction ritual approach to understand the interactions of creative workers and the promis-

es of potential knowledge exchange and innovation. Co-working spaces inherently, in Goffman's terms, institutionalise a *gathering*: a set of a minimum of two individual who are in another's immediate presence. Their spatial limitations and organisational structure make co-working spaces a clear example of a *social occasion*, an "*undertaking, or event, bounded in regard to place and time and typically facilitated by fixed equipment*" (Goffman, 1963, p. 18).

In such (bodily) co-presence, an individual gives an expression, but also gives off other sign activities that will be interpreted by other participants in the social occasion (Goffman, 1959). Goffman (1959) defined such face-to-face interactions as "*the reciprocal influence of individuals upon one another's actions when in one another's immediate physical presence*" (p. 15). He argues that in these interactions individuals aim to maintain their face - the positive social value or 'character' a person effectively claims for himself that is assessed by others - in relation to the line - the pattern of verbal and non-verbal acts in which the individual expresses her or his view of the situation, others assumed she or he has taken (Goffman, 1967). In social situations, sociality has to be curated, managed and performed by creative workers in order to ensure playing the 'correct' role and making the 'right' impression (Cockayne, 2016). Conversely, having the *wrong face* or being *out of face* causes embarrassment and a spoiled reputation. Therefore, individuals are constantly involved in *face work* (Goffman, 1967) and *impression management* (Goffman, 1959).

In this, Goffman (1959) discerns a *frontstage*, where individuals show their performances to others, and a *backstage*, which is ordinarily not seen by others and where they can step out of character and prepare their public performances. In many workplaces, these stages are separated by some form of barrier (such as cubicles or walls). In co-working spaces, however, this is much less self-evident, as personal 'offices' or studios are often at least partly shared and 'unrelated' co-workers are often working on the same table or desk. This inherently constitutes a situation of continuous co-presence, in which users sense to be close enough to others to be perceived and (subconsciously) monitored in whatever they do (Goffman, 1963). Similarly,

observing how these workers perform *face work* in a situation where maintaining face and correct withdrawals are much more complicated compared to those in more private workplaces could yield interesting insights into *face work* in the cultural and creative industries.

As described above, Goffman's work fits well with the practices of co-working. It comes as no surprise that many scholars have been citing his work or using his concepts when discussing this topic. Especially the concepts of *frontstage*, *backstage* and (theatrical) performances have been explicitly connected to co-working, with several researchers (e.g. Blagoev et al., 2019; Ivaldi et al., 2018; Richardson, 2017; Spinuzzi, 2012) referring to either of the concepts. Others mentioned other Goffmanian concepts, such as *unfocussed interaction* referring to indirect contact (Bilandzic, Schroeter, & Foth, 2013), *encountering* as "*passive observation of the punctuated moments of daily community activity*" (Garrett et al., 2017, p. 832), or rituals, denoting patterns of interactions and platforms for testing new ideas to peers before going to the market (Blagoev et al., 2019). Notwithstanding these references to Goffman's work though, none of these studies use either of these concepts as guiding concepts, rarely referring to them more than once (or, in some cases, taking a very Goffmanian perspective discussing impression management and performing, without referring to Goffman's work (e.g. Cockayne, 2016)). In sum, Goffman's perspectives can be a very relevant toolkit for analysing how interactions occur in co-working spaces (and their potential spin-offs in knowledge exchange and innovation), but systematic analysis has so far been lacking. This is what this chapter aims to do.

Interaction rituals and emotional energy

As Butcher (2018) and Blagoev et al. (2019) recently highlighted, co-working spaces are imbued with rituals. Such *interaction rituals*, argues Goffman (1967), are performed in the *frontstage*, yet, as they are often complicated, they require preparations in the *backstage*. They honour *sacred objects* and practices that are socially valued. Building upon Durkheim's (1912) work, Collins (2005)

emphasises that these *sacred objects* (which can be symbolic or physical) represent *group solidarity* through which group membership is established and reinforced. Thus, jeopardising them, or breaking their associated rituals, brings moral unease to the group (that can be restored by apologising). Most importantly, rituals must take place in a condition of *bodily* and *situational co-presence*. Successful rituals evoke shared action and (symbolic) awareness, resulting in rising *group solidarity* and increased *emotional energy* for its members. A greater sense of group solidarity strengthens the groups' membership basis, erects barriers to outsiders and fosters the development of new rituals.

Emotional energy, a form of *collective effervescence* (Durkheim, 1912) translated to individual emotions, is only awoken through physical meetings; co-presence and co-working will therefore often be preferred over long distance communications. Importantly, individuals are drawn to rituals and situations that may provide positive *emotional energy*, and are more inclined to divert from those that do not. Therefore, *interaction rituals* are the 'building blocks' of broader social structures in the sense that participation in *interaction rituals* generates higher *emotional energy*, and with the individuals' desire to engage in *emotional energy* evoking activities, successful rituals become *chains* that constitute structures of collective social activities (R. Collins, 2005).

Considering the persisting *bodily* and *situational co-presence* in co-working spaces, I would argue that co-working spaces are places where *interaction ritual chains* structure daily life, where membership is continuously constituted and where the success of the users is closely tied to the *emotional energy* of the creative workers. With this, I refer to the expectation that a heightened *emotional energy* increases the chances of future interactions in a quantitative manner (i.e. a rising chance of follow-up conversations), but also qualitatively (i.e. increasing trust and group solidarity lowered the barriers for sharing advice and opening up to other co-workers). This, evidently, advances the likelihood of having (innovative) collaborations and forms of knowledge exchange that would benefit the individual creative workers. Creative entrepreneurship is continuously staged and acted in

order to be trusted, to convince others of entrepreneurial capacities, to be taken seriously and to seek legitimacy. In short: creative workers need to convincingly enact their businesses (A. R. Anderson, 2005). Earlier research has shown that successful *interaction rituals* fostering entrepreneurial engagement have an effect on entrepreneurial innovation and success (Goss, 2007), and that observing the everyday rituals of peers led to co-workers participating in everyday social exchanges (Butcher, 2018). *Interaction rituals*, therefore, could determine a creative workers' place in this market for creativity and innovation, and yield access to the relevant flows of information.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

As the empirical body of research on knowledge exchange and innovation in co-working spaces is growing yet limited (Capdevila, 2014), a qualitative, explorative approach provides valuable insights into the fit of theoretical models on the relevant cases (Maanen, 1998). Data was collected in a two-step approach. First, following the definition of innovation outlined in Chapter 2 (p. 81) – “a field-specific process that has value in specific contexts and locations and takes different shapes in different settings” that occurs in a haphazard, informal way through social interactions (Wijngaarden et al., 2019b, p. 10) – I aimed to observe micro-interactions and forms of knowledge exchange between creative workers ethnographically. The spotlight was on what Goffman (1963) calls *unfocussed interaction*, the exchanges of information occurring in situations of *co-presence* in which none of the participants take the official centre of attention: the unplanned interactions in the workplaces or vicinity of coffee machines, cafés, entrances or restaurants.

In order to observe social practices and how interactions were shaped, played out and were (not) followed-up upon, I spent in total one month in October 2015 participating and observing in a creative co-working space, the ‘flex-workers’ rooms in Klein Haarlem in the Netherlands. Klein Haarlem, at the start

of the project, housed almost 90 creative businesses, though not all of them were using the ‘flex-workers’ rooms. Some had separate offices – yet these too shared the space (e.g. corridors, balconies, smokers’ rooms, ‘common rooms’) and also participated in lunches, drinks and other activities. Of these almost 90 firms, seventeen worked in design, thirteen in advertising, in film, video, photography, nine in music, performing and visual arts, eight in arts and antiques markets, four in architecture, four in software and electronic publishing, two in publishing, two in crafts and one in digital- and entertainment-media. The sub-sector of ten firms was unknown, and six were non-creative industries related businesses. All businesses were freelancers (which was usually visible in the company name, often the full name of the individual) or a SME, often employing under five creative workers.

The two ‘flex-rooms’ were usually occupied by between two and ten – usually self-employed creatives working alongside each other – leading to a persisting *situation of unfocussed interaction*. Nearly all users stuck to one particular room, which looks like a former classroom, with high ceilings and large windows on one of the sides. One of the walls was filled with bookshelves which house books, computer screens and a stereo set, as well as some lockers for e.g. equipment of the space’s users. In one of the corners, a few sofas were installed, together with a small table, resembling a living room setting. There were two large desks, each occupying some 8 people, on either side of the room. Beer crates were spread out and hung throughout the room for decoration, and some of the walls were filled with ‘inspirational’ posters.

Additionally, some twenty days were allocated to observations in the seven other workplaces. Observations were recorded in fieldnotes, which were later on analysed in Atlas.ti. Though this ethnographic approach serves as the main source of data, it was supplemented by the 43 second cycle (see Chapter 1) interviews with creative workers. Additionally, the locations’ managers were interviewed in order to discuss their experiences and choices they made in fostering interaction and cooperation

among creative workers themselves, and managers and workers. All interviews were recorded and then subsequently transcribed to allow qualitative analysis.

During fieldwork, I have always been overt in my position, introducing myself to participants during visits and presenting myself on the (more or less mandatory) Facebook group and during introductory talks. Fieldnotes were mostly written contemporaneously (keeping a notepad open and making jottings and notes throughout the day) and after visits, inscribing the fieldnotes right after leaving the fieldwork every day. Considering that continuously typing is commonplace in co-working spaces, jotting notes has been relatively non-intrusive (Emerson et al., 2011). Most attention has been paid to how people interacted, not only verbally but also their attitudes and non-verbal communication. I also specifically included the affordances of space in terms of interactions: how and whether spatial characteristics stimulated or hampered such social interactions. As periods of interactions were often followed by longer periods of silence (cf. De Vaujany & Aroles, 2018), there often was ample time to transform the jottings to actual fieldnotes.

The first analysis of the ethnographic observations as well as the interviews were inspired by a constructivist grounded theory-oriented approach (Charmaz, 2006), with the interview protocol being developed and specified over time, and the fieldnotes being coded in an open, mostly in-vivo approach. However, in practice, I took a much more thematic analysis approach when further analysing the data, as theoretical concepts have been guiding concepts, and theory development was not one of – articulated – goals of this study (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The second analysis returned to relevant concepts from the theory, based on the micro-sociological approach developed by Goffman (1959, 1967) and Collins (1981, 2005), thus focussing on e.g. as well as *face work*, *backstage and frontstage* behaviour, *interaction rituals*, and *sacred objects*. It aimed to connect the codes generated in the open coding process to the theoretical themes, as well as to provide new insights into the rather descriptive codes generated in the first analysis. In a third step, these combined the-

oretical and data-derived themes were divided and collected in three overarching themes: indicators of the boundary between *backstage* and *frontstage* settings, the issues that emerge from this tension, and how rituals may solve this tension and – eventually – may foster knowledge exchange.

RESULTS

Backstage work in a frontstage setting

A dramaturgical approach to co-working

Co-working spaces provide an interesting case for studying creative work, as the boundary between *frontstage* and *backstage* is performed rather than physical. Co-working is a paradoxical social situation in which work usually is practiced on an individual level, yet, in a spatial context in which a physical closeness to peers – i.e. *bodily co-presence* – is actively sought after. This prescribes a continuous monitoring of the other participants, while at the same time displaying a proficiency in performing the role of the hard-working creative. The seemingly contradictory roles, sociality and individuality are negotiated on the collective level. Important here is the transition from a *frontstage* setting, in which co-workers actively acknowledge the presence of others, to a *backstage* setting, still a *gathering* in the sense that the audience is continuously monitored, but with a pretence that the users are working individually. A performed *backstage* is characterised by silence, an avoidance of (non-)verbal interaction and a retraction to individual work practices.

This performed barrier between the *frontstage* and *backstage* was clearly visible in the actions of the present creative workers in Klein Haarlem and the other locations. Despite working in a community setting and thus being *bodily co-present*, many safely retreated to their perceived private spheres by for example using *involvement shields* (Goffman, 1963) such as headphones, trying to avoid making unnecessary eye contact (Butcher, 2018) and by their usage of the available space. These observations bear a striking resemblance to the mediations to maintain silence described by De Vaujany and Aroles (2018):

“The use of headphones, the choice and continuous adaptation of a body posture (to avoid staring into the eyes of other people and to avoid adopting a body position that would suggest that one is open to social interactions), movements (such as the practice of walking that could also be a way to create a bubble to disconnect from the outside world), retreats in liminal spaces (such as cabin booth, stairs, street, internal courts), the paradoxical use of white noises or music (through headphones) or the choice of a location close to a machine producing a continuous noise.” (p. 12).

Enacting boundaries

There seemed to be implicit rules of seat taking, with ‘new’ entrants taking a desk not too close to someone unknown if the room allowed a more even spread across the space. Spatial compositions were far from arbitrary: the entrance to the workplace was always accompanied by a quick, casual glance over the distribution of chairs, desks and the positions of present co-workers. Goffman (1963) calls such implicit acknowledgement *civil inattention*: “one gives to another enough visual notice to demonstrate that one appreciates that the other is present [...] while [...] withdrawing one’s attention from him so as to express that he does not constitute a target of special curiosity of design” (p. 84).

Most importantly here, the performed boundary between the *frontstage* and *backstage* was predominantly defined by unobtrusiveness. Paradoxically, collective individual work requires silence, confining nuisances such as phone calls or meetings to liminal spaces (e.g. corridors, designated ‘booths’, the smokers’ balcony) outside of the actual workplace (cf. De Vaujany & Aroles, 2018). Indeed, the extended periods of silence were one of the first things I noticed doing fieldwork, which clearly translates to the fieldnotes, which include many references to the temporality of quietness (e.g. as I described on the first day of observations: “It has been quiet for over 2 hours. Everyone is focusing on her or his computer without any verbal interactions”). For as long as the silence is collectively convincingly performed (or shared, as De Vaujany and Aroles (2018) put it), the relative *backstage* work environment remains untouched.

However, there always was a persisting and latent tension between the individual and the collective. Breaching the performed boundary – by breaching the silence – had the power to transform the atmosphere within seconds. This immediately resulted in a quick transition towards *frontstage* settings. The discontinuity of silence usually had a ritualistic, sometimes even time-specific character. As I will explain in the following sections, such a transition allowed the formation of a sense of community (see also Garrett et al., 2017) and potential collaborations, and subsequently fostered the promise of knowledge exchange and innovation. The occurrence of these interactions, therefore, can be key to understanding the innovative potentials of co-working spaces. Yet, successfully enacting the role as a creative worker and engaging in these rituals is challenging, which may provide an answer to the question why the development of communities and collaborations is less common in co-working spaces than thought at face-value (Spinuzzi, 2012).

Navigating the individual and collective setting: face loss and embarrassment

Unsuccessful transitions

During fieldwork, I observed a tension in the balance between group membership providing access to the collective knowledge base and the individual work or firm. Though many interviewees (see Chapter 4) articulated that they reaped the benefits of working in the vicinity of their peers, engaging the individual and group identities turned out to be quite a challenge for some, with *face loss* being a serious threat. Additionally, the porous boundaries between the *frontstage*, in which the creative and entrepreneurial image are performed to the peers, potential collaborators and competitors (Porter, 1998), and the *backstage* in which these performances are built and rehearsed, provided ample resources for the studies of the tensions within such co-working spaces. Co-working spaces, in such settings, are the arena caught between the domain of two social occasions: the silent workplace, and the more effervescent (cf. Durkheim, 1912) co-working place, with each inhabiting their own regulations and *codes of conduct* (cf. Goffman, 1963).

Indeed, some co-working space users experienced difficulties in navigating *frontstage* and *backstage* and the *face work* that is demanded of them. When working, they retreated to their *backstages*, no longer minding their co-workers. However, when this state of concentration was involuntarily disturbed, this could incite *embarrassments* and decreased *emotional energy*. In general, issues related to noise disturbances were an essential ingredient for (problems in) *face work*, as this often pushed *backstage* roles into the *frontstage*. *Backstage* actions, such as loud typing, cursing, being unsure about how to handle chairs or other physical objects and making all kinds of noises in general tended to annoy others, causing *embarrassment*. Again, this was corrected by making jokes, often by the other ‘participants’, or by others pretending they did not hear or see the incident. Evidently, such involuntary transitions to the *frontstage* rarely caused any further exchanges and interactions.

Role proficiency

Another hurdle can be found in how co-workers (not or dis) engaged in playing the social game. Co-workers not playing the game and ‘neglecting’ their role as a co-worker, in some cases, tended to frustrate their peers. For example, what respondents called ‘nerds’, those avoiding all contact with others, sometimes bothered their co-located creative workers, as they felt like these ‘nerds’ failed to play the ‘co-working role’. Others, on the other hand, overplayed their roles in the eyes of their fellow co-workers. For example, some co-workers adapted their (collective) workplaces to their own preferences by adding furniture, decorating or by changing the spatial configurations. Abigail [Workplace manager] illustrated this by stating that although such efforts may strengthen the connection with and within a place, it “*also annoyed some people. Because then someone has a particular view on how the place should look, and then someone brings old chairs, but these chairs are not appreciated by the others.*” Other grounds for *embarrassment* were related to transgressions in the roles of being self-employed and being requested to behave in certain ways by e.g. the co-working space’s staff. For example, when freelancers were

asked to present themselves, this was accompanied by awkward giggling and some quick-witted remarks about ‘feeling like in high school’.

Evidently, not all of interactions were equally successful in arousing positive *emotional energy*. In a few instances, co-workers were sarcastic or annoyed when new members asked practical questions they considered unnecessary breaches of their workflow, demonstrating that group membership requires proficiency in the role of a professional creative worker. For example, when a new member asked whether he put his screen in the correct storage shelf, a woman reacted ironically by saying that “*it will probably be destroyed tomorrow, that’s how people act here. Or they’ll remove the keys from your keyboard*”. With all the audience laughing, the new member quietly put back his screen on the desk and seemingly retreated to *backstage* work behaviour. Unmistakably, instead of amplifying group solidarity, such interactions have the opposite effect for at least some members.

In sum, due to the ambiguous character of co-working spaces, there is an unceasing risk of *embarrassment* and a pressure to perform the correct role as the creative (co)worker. This ties in well with the idea that co-working itself is a skill that must be learned in order to reap the benefits of working in such a setting (Butcher, 2018). In other words, co-workers must be socialised the practices of co-working, and this does not always go smoothly. Notwithstanding these difficulties, though, as already emphasised by e.g. Blagoev et al. (2019), co-working spaces do have many opportunities for (successfully) building communities and as such also for fulfilling their innovative potential. These are (among other settings) to be found in *interaction rituals*.

Bridging boundaries successfully: rituals in co-working spaces

I observed that, alike all social situations, co-working spaces were permeated by curated and more informal rituals organising social life (in line with Butcher, 2018). In this, I discern three broader categories of – usually unscripted (Blagoev et al., 2019) – rituals predominantly instigating social interactions: offerings, problem-solving interactions and gatherings.

Offerings

The first ritual through which group membership is explicitly expressed was (and not surprisingly so) to offer drinks. At least a few times a day, a co-worker offered to get coffee or tea for all other members present. In this, I observed that this rarely was the same person twice, indicating that there is an expectation to rotate 'turns'. This I also noticed in my first days in the space, in which various other present members offered to teach me how to use the coffee machine, and how to do the 'maintenance duties' such as filling the reservoirs and cleaning the machine. Thus, this ritual seems to be an implicit rule: a reciprocal gesture to others. In this, it resembles Mauss' (2011) classic work on gifting in the sense that such reciprocity felt – at least to me – more of an obligation than true altruism. What is more, though in itself offering coffee is not something unexpected, it often also was a starting sign for (new) conversations that would go beyond the superficial. For example, in some cases, other co-workers offered me to help out in carrying the coffee back to the workplace. Yet, having to 'kill time', waiting for the machine to do its grinding and pouring, led to in-depth discussions on work, problems encountered, societal issues, the co-working space and past events. In sum, in such a situation, the coffee machine is an object affording the generation of *emotional energy* and the consolidation of group membership.

This importance of reciprocal gestures and politeness also manifested in rituals concerning monetary exchanges. Within the one month spent at the workspace, there have been a few instances in which money was requested, for example for presents, for outings, and for recurring costs. Group membership was established either by donating the required amount of money in a piggy bank (signing a list once the required sum was paid), or by specific members asking every co-worker to donate face-to-face. Failing to do so thus resulted in the *loss of face* and a decline in trust (Banks et al., 2000).

In a similar vein, arrivals and withdrawals sparked conversations by expressing the mandatory greetings. After having been silent for an hour or more, breaking the silence seemed to

be more difficult, as the *backstage boundary* became more established. I noticed that, as the silence persisted, it was less likely to be broken without a ritualistic event or situation. Whereas, after several people had entered the scene in a short period of time, co-workers seemed to be more inclined to start talking (for example, about clients delaying their payments and other more practical issues). The introduction of new workers – which happened a handful times during my month in the co-working space – had a similar effect, sparking conversations about professional identities, creative work and potential collaborations. This introduction was usually done by the hosts, but also by members having to introduce themselves on the workplace's Facebook group.

Problem-solving interactions

Another, surprisingly common conversation starter was related to overcoming office inconveniences. Such nuisances seemed to be a recurring issue; in the co-working space where most fieldwork was conducted, almost every day a co-working member asked for help with practical difficulties. During the fieldwork, issues with fridges, power strips, internet connections, coffee machines, laptop chargers and office chairs ignited interactions between co-workers. The willingness to help usually was high, and especially the successes in overcoming these hurdles greatly increased the participants' *emotional energy*. With this, I mean that having successfully solved one issue, the conversations often were to be continued, encompassing different (e.g. more creative or entrepreneurially substantive) topics.

This is important because, generally, silence was predominant in the co-working space (cf. De Vaujany & Aroles, 2018). The tendency to start interactions 'out of the blue' was limited, as emphasised above. Many users seemed to superficially know each other (as in knowing their names, but not exactly what they do), but they did not seem very keen on starting a conversation without a cause. By helping each other, the threshold to discuss other topics (e.g. work practices, challenges, new ideas) was lowered as well. Therefore, with rising *emotional energy*, a

successful interaction was in many cases succeeded by further exchanges of knowledge and help. It thus turned out to be only a small step from trying to fix an Internet connection to helping each other with Photoshop issues or entrepreneurial dilemmas – once users got talking, this talk seemed to diffuse to other aspects of creative work. This indicates that the findings of Bianchi, Casnici, & Squazzoni (2018) could also be working in the opposite direction: not only does economic interaction generate solidarity, rising solidarity might also contribute to generating future economic interactions.

Gatherings

Third, and very much in line with the literature on co-working (e.g. J. Brown, 2017; Merkel, 2015; Moriset, 2013; Spinuzzi, 2012), recurring, usually top-down organised curated events such as drinks and lunches were a fruitful ritual (quite similar to the discussion of the breakfast ritual in Blagoev et al., 2019). Obviously, these events were much more of an obvious *front-stage* setting than all other rituals, which made them having a stronger socialising nature. Curated gatherings and events not only afforded escaping the isolation of the individual daily work and the experience the community-advantages in practice, but also, during lunches or drinks, many co-workers felt an informal opportunity to discuss the everyday problems they encountered in their work. Following the theory of Collins (2005), this could lead to a heightened *emotional energy* due to synchronised rituals and co-presence.

Indeed, during the events I attended, intentions for collaboration or other forms of support were voiced continuously. For example, during an organised soup lunch, two new co-workers that were not acquainted introduced themselves during the lunch, and their conversation, without much small talk, soon covered their complementary work activities. With some bystanders joining in, this very quickly turned into a conversation about the development of one of the new members' business models.

Similarly, I observed informal interactions turning into significant forms of informal help and knowledge exchange during such a lunch gathering, as described in my fieldnotes: [in the background, Frank and Jeroen⁴⁰ are continuing their conversation about WordPress. Jeroen is advising Frank to use specific settings – his advice seems geared towards the more technologic mechanisms behind the platform. This conversation is already taking at least half an hour. In the final minutes, Jeroen offers to help Frank when he is further on in developing his WordPress website]. As such, in these occasions, workers tended to be eager to share information about their work as well as offering (practical) help to other workers, inciting a fertile ‘learning-by-interacting’ environment (Lundvall, 1992). Indeed, such collective activities, doing something together rather than just being together, have the potential of stimulating fraternity (Sennett, 2018).

Failed rituals

As mentioned above, during these rituals, the silence of individual work was broken, and *backstage* behaviour suddenly turned into *frontstage* presentations in which work was discussed, identities as well as opinions were expressed and knowledge was shared. As many interviewees confirmed, such short chit-chats laid the foundations that could spark innovative ideas and fruitful combinations in the longer run. However, not every ritual was equally successful in this.

A ritual particular to the co-working space in which the fieldwork took place was checking in on a screen (including making a picture) when arriving in order to demarcate group membership based on who is present, and who is not. The interviews revealed that this practice is not uncommon among co-working spaces in the Netherlands, with those that have worked in multiple locations referring to similar practices. Yet, I observed that even though it was developed with the intention of fostering interaction and innovation, some respondents found this rather embarrassing and a hurdle. In the interviews, respondents in

40 Names have been anonymised.

other co-working spaces – having to log in with a social media account – for example emphasised that they preferred not to mix their social and work lives (quite contrary to the idea of the increasing overlap between the personal and work identity vividly outlined by e.g. Nixon & Crewe, 2004; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2011; McRobbie, 2016; Currid, 2007), and considered this an unprofessional and embarrassing confounding of their frontstages and backstages.

In other cases, not *rituals* themselves were problematic, but co-workers struggling to execute them in the correct manner. As described above, entering or withdrawing from the scene demanded the mandatory greetings. However, many clearly found it difficult juggling the balance between not disturbing others and being polite (i.e. failing to perform the ritual correctly). For example, when a co-worker tried to open the door in the quietest manner, her ‘forced’ quietness made her audience laugh and joke about this. This evidently indicated that this individual aimed at maintaining *face* by not wanting to discontinue the performed silence, yet by overplaying her role, experienced *embarrassment*, after which the ‘audience’ restored her *face*, clearing the air by joking innocently.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

As has been recognised for a long time, innovation is not only ascribed to individual motivation and traits, but is also caused by environmental characteristics (e.g. Porter, 1998). This chapter aimed to investigate one of such aspects: the vicinity of other creative workers. Where much of the literature on innovation in the creative industries emphasised the importance of co-location (e.g. Banks et al., 2000; Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010; O’Connor, 2004; Pratt, 2000; Scott, 2000; Turok, 2003; Zarlenka, Ulldemolins, & Morató, 2016) or the innovative potential of a place and its users (e.g. Baptista & Swann, 1998; Chapain et al., 2010; Malmberg et al., 2005; O’Connor, 2004), how such interactions occur and may or may not have innovative potential

remains one of the black boxes in research on geography and the cultural economy (Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009).

The case of collaborative workplaces provides interesting insights in this matter, as in such places, cluster dynamics and innovation play out on a micro-level scale. Previous research emphasised that co-working spaces are often used in order to gain access to a community that is not available from home or other more closed workplaces (Fuzy, 2015; Gandini, 2015; Kwiatkowski & Buczynski, 2011; Spinuzzi, 2012; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017), yet, it also highlighted that the mere co-location does not necessarily result in knowledge exchange (J. Brown, 2017; Capdevila, 2015; Gandini, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Moriset, 2013). Similarly, this micro-scale has mostly been neglected by researchers investigating the importance of face-to-face interactions: the individuals, micro-firms and communities (Capdevila, 2015).

The micro-sociological approach of this research offers detailed insights into the empirical foundations of the abundantly used concepts that so far have little foundations in rigorous analysis. As Collins (2005) argues:

“A theory of interaction ritual is the key to microsociology, and microsociology is the key to much that is larger. The smallscale, the here-and-now of face-to-face interaction, is the scene of action and the site of social actors. If we are going to find the agency of social life, it will be here” (p. 3).

Behind this approach lies in the presumption that all social structures are founded on a pattern of repetitive associations in relation to particular objects and places people have, not because they are programmed to do so, but by the sheer lack of cognitive capacities that allow for any other form of social organization (R. Collins, 1981). The aim of this chapter, therefore, has been to observe the micro-interactions, which, on the aggregate level, afford the development of a collaborative community capable of fostering innovation. Or, in other words, it did not aim to explore what sparks innovation in the creative industries,

but rather how the interactions that could promote knowledge exchange occur, and under which conditions.

The analysis propelled three considerations: 1] co-working spaces are *governed* by a performed boundary between *backstage* and *frontstage* settings. 2] Performing the 'correct' *role* is challenging, which may contribute to the lack of flourishing, knowledge-intensive communities in co-working spaces. 3] Rituals may provide the incentives to incite interactions, eventually lowering the threshold to have more substantive, work-oriented communication that may eventually spark innovativeness in the longer run.

With co-working spaces being social occasions, continuously playing the 'right' role as a creative worker is paramount, emphasising the importance of *face work* in such settings. This *role*, however, was not confined to verbal interactions, but was also determined by a convergence of a (performed) *backstage* and *frontstage*. Performing this *backstage* is most prominently characterised by participating in a 'collective silence', with an informal code of conduct prescribing unobtrusiveness yet continuous mutual monitoring. However, through successful *interaction rituals*, the porous boundary between the *backstage* and *frontstage* evaporated. Examples of rising *emotional energy* and thus group solidarity include mutual informal help, 'office manners' and more curated synchronised events. By appropriately engaging in *interaction rituals* (R. Collins, 2005), one gains access to the knowledge flows within a specific locality necessary to create new and innovative practices (Butcher, 2018). Failing to do so correctly, however, leads to *embarrassment* and the *loss of face*, hampering the development of such innovative communities.

This research adds to the field of economic geography in the sense that it opens up the macro-perspective of larger scale studies on knowledge exchange to that of micro-level, modern day ethnographies of work practices. It has shown that concepts such as 'buzz' or 'face-to-face' (e.g. Asheim et al., 2007; Bathelt, 2007; Storper & Venables, 2004) do not occur naturally, but require some efforts for the promises of innovation and knowledge exchange to be fulfilled. On the topic of co-working,

it has applied classic sociological theory that is mentioned by numerous studies in the field, yet never truly received systematic analysis. It showed how the work of Goffman and Collins is (still) relevant for those interested in interactions, and also that co-working research benefits from taking this perspective. It also adds an explanation to the issue why in many co-working spaces the ‘good neighbour’ logic in which co-workers mostly tended to work parallel to each other rather than collectively (Spinuzzi, 2012).

Nevertheless, though this research is built on a multiple case study, much of the data-collection is confined to one particular co-working space. This space is relatively small, with usually just a handful of co-workers present in either of the rooms. Obviously, this stands in a sharp contrast to the larger co-working spaces housing hundreds or even more members, or, for example, those that have a strong incubator function (or lack thereof). Similarly, the ethnographic nature makes it rather difficult to generalise the findings to other cases, yet, at the same time, it must also speak to larger issues (Geertz, 1973). Future research could take the perspective presented in this chapter in order to explore whether it also holds in other (workplace) settings.

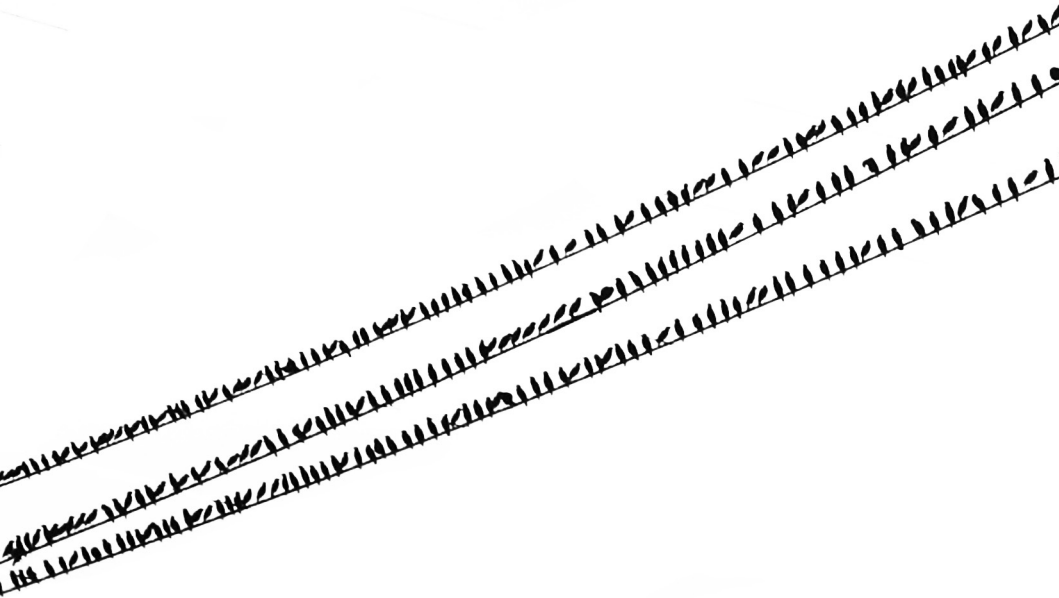
Another limitation – and also an avenue for future research – is to be found in the relation between co-working, interactions and innovation. While I have aimed to connect the concept of innovation to the interactions sparked by co-working, this relationship is not particularly explicit. What this research has pursued is developing an understanding of the places, interactions and rituals that – potentially – afford innovation. My analysis is about what lies at the basis of innovation, the first (interactive) steps. The actual knowledge exchange and innovative practices are barely captured in this chapter, but what makes such efforts possible is. Future research could therefore employ a stronger focus on knowledge exchange on the micro-level, looking, for example, how more established connections between co-workers evolve over time and how this affects their work.

In practice, in line with e.g. Brown (2017), Spinuzzi (2012) and Merkel (2015), the findings confirm that curation is impor-

tant, for example by facilitating events or by the spatial configuration of the location (e.g. availability of coffee machines). Yet, it suggests that hosts should also allow an atmosphere that encourages DIY attitudes and autonomy. This supports members in developing a culture of mutual help and shared responsibility for the place's success, as well as the emergence of *ritual chains* essential to fostering interactions. Successful self-organisation increases the participants' *emotional energy*, consolidation the potential of future interactions.

Part III

Symbolic capital of creative places



Chapter 6

Close to the 'local cool'

Creative place reputation in Dutch 'ordinary cities'

INTRODUCTION⁴¹

As the previous two chapters have demonstrated, interactions between creative workers – instigated by interaction rituals – are an important condition for potential knowledge exchange, and therefore potential increase in innovativeness. Especially for the creative industries, which are perhaps more than any other industry associated with intuitive practice, learning-by-doing and tacit, non-transferrable skills, being inside the important networks is essential. It is in these networks that knowledge is obtained, transformed and then, in an innovative new way, plugged into global circuits (O'Connor, 2004). These networks do not only exist socially, but also in terms of symbolic capital. Moreover, the notion that it is especially the metropolitan appeal of a place that attracts creatives (Hall, 2000; e.g. O'Connor, 2004; Pratt, 1997) overlooks the many creative clusters and co-working places outside of the global cities. Some of the ten cases included in this research, in fact, cover much smaller cities in the Netherlands.

So, why do creative workers, businesses and artists have the tendency to flock together – within and outside of the metropolitan core? This question has inspired a large number of research initiatives from numerous academic disciplines. Clustering literature, for instance, pointed at the importance of improved access to supply side externalities such as infrastructures (Gordon & McCann, 2005b) and social resources (Baptista & Swann, 1998) like knowledge spillovers or social networks (e.g. Comunan, 2011; Grabher, 2004). The notions of 'buzz' (Asheim et al., 2007; Storper & Venables, 2004) and 'noise' (Grabher, 2002b) expand this social aspect of clustering by seeing co-location not only in terms of direct collaboration, but also as a matter of simply 'being there' (Gertler, 1995) and absorbing the 'psychological motivation' or 'localised passion' (Bhansing et al., 2018; Storper & Venables, 2004) of indirect in-group contact. However, clusters are also approached in terms of production, where

41 This chapter is a slightly altered version of: Wijngaarden, Y., Hitters, E., & Bhansing, P. V. (2019). Close to the 'local cool': creative place reputation in Dutch 'ordinary cities'. *Creative Industries Journal*, 12(1), 86-104.

the locality functions as a 'seal of quality' (Molotch, 1996, 2002), authentic neo-bohemia (Lloyd, 2002), or provides 'artistic dividend' (Markusen & Schrock, 2006).

We propose that the common denominator in these approaches is the cluster's reputation, and that this (multifaceted) reputation plays an important role in the locational decision-making practices of creative workers. Yet, Montanari, Scapolan and Mizzau (2018) recently argued that the activation of these decision-making processes lacked investigation and that there is a "*call for a more nuanced understanding of the factors associated with both the attraction and retention*" of creative workers (J. Brown, 2015, p. 2352). This chapter addresses this issue by looking in-depth at the locational decision-making practices and experiences of co-located creative workers in the Netherlands, concentrating especially on second and third tier cities.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Reputation and the creative industries beyond the metropolises

Much of the aforementioned debate has focussed on the urban context (P. Collins & Cunningham, 2017), and especially on the first tier cities and prominent metropolitan or creative cities (White, 2010) such as Amsterdam (Kloosterman, 2004; Peck, 2012), Beijing and Shanghai (Liu, 2009), London (Lee & Drever, 2013), Vancouver (Hutton, 2004), New York (Currid, 2007), San Francisco (Pratt, 2002), Paris (Aubry, Blein, & Vivant, 2015) and Berlin (Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010; Lange, 2009). These global cities are believed to inhabit the diversity and tolerance pursued by creative workers (Florida, 2002; J. M. Jacobs, 1962; Lawton, Murphy, & Redmond, 2013), as well as the creative milieu (Hall, 2000), the 'cool jobs' (David & Rosenbloom, 1990; Neff et al., 2005; Scott, 2005; Storper & Scott, 2009), the neo-bohemian vibrancy (Lloyd, 2002), and the relevant networks, clusters, infrastructures and embedded knowledge (Banks et al., 2000) that allegedly would foster creative and professional success and innovation.

Yet, some authors (e.g. Petridou & Ioannides, 2012) argue that current research on the creative industries has an ‘urban bias’, with a distinct gap in the literature on the link between culture and creativity in more peripheral areas. In a similar vein, Amin and Graham (1997) state that the focus in much of the literature has too often been on what they call single cities, the famous metropolises such as Los Angeles, which are conveniently thought to encompass all global urban trends. Even within such ‘extraordinary’ cities, they argue, only certain places, such as creative or industrial areas, are emphasised. This partial representation tends to overlook the context that does not fit the authors’ argumentation. Moreover, overgeneralisation from only a few examples to ‘unexceptional’, ‘ordinary’ cities – these cities that are not among the top creative cities or world financial centres – calls for research on such places in order to counter this bias.

At the same time, however, there is a growing interest in the amenities and pull-factors of the rural based creative industries, on rural cultural production and on fairs and festivals. Often trying to escape the fast-paced urban life, many creatives are attracted to the beautiful and inspirational landscapes, the (relative) remoteness, quietness (White, 2010), quality of life and a strong, close-knit communities (P. Collins & Cunningham, 2017). In such places, nature is “*right on your doorstep*” (C. Gibson, Luckman, & Willoughby-Smith, 2010, p. 31) and serves as a driver of creativity and authenticity.

The area ‘in between’ the metropolitan and rural worlds, conversely, has received little attention so far. Far less is known about how reputation works in second tier cities, and how these ‘ordinary’ cities attract and retain their creative workers (P. Collins & Cunningham, 2017). Noticeably, many creatives work outside of the world’s metropolises, and many of these places are competing to attract creatives (J. Brown, 2015). Creative places in these second or third tier cities can have advantages compared to their metropolitan counterparts, for example in providing affordable studios (Champion, 2010). Yet, empirical research also demonstrates that they are sometimes considered just a step towards ‘graduating’ towards a more appealing area

in order to obtain more high-profile clients or develop a more attractive brand (Champion, 2010). Similarly, the research of Brown (2015) on Birmingham's creative workers' locational decision-making considerations indicates that the primary factor leading to migration was mostly serendipitous, not so much the appeal of urban amenities or the 'quality of place'. Again, her respondents cited their residence in Birmingham being contested by others, as it was considered 'second rate'. Many of them expressed a (speculative) desire to move to the creative global cities, such as Berlin, Paris and Chicago.

This chapter therefore focusses on the attraction and retention of creatives in creative clusters in the 'ordinary' second and third tier cities by looking at the places' soft infrastructures: the networks or a specific images that are meaningful factors in the attractiveness of certain places for creatives (Cardoso & Meijers, 2016). What is it that attracts creatives to these places and which roles do networks, 'buzz' and knowledge exchange play in this regard? We are interested in the reputation of clusters that lack the appeal of a world city or the rural amenities, and how such reputation economies play out in the day-to-day working practices of creative workers (Conor et al., 2015) outside of the world's creative metropolises.

To answer these questions, this chapter presents a qualitative analysis of 43 interviews with Dutch co-located creative workers and artists that provide an in-depth insight in their historical and current decision-making processes as well as their experiences of working in co-working spaces and clusters. It examines how networks influence a place's reputation and, subsequently, how this reputation can affect creative work, the place's sustainability, and the value it adds to places and products.

This chapter is structured as follows: the next two sections address some important theoretical concepts and their relation with locational decision-making processes and co-location in the creative industries. This is followed by the data-collection and methodological choices. The results are structured in three sections, discussing the global network of clusters, the affordances of reputation, and image and reputation as pull-factors. It ends with a conclusion, discussion and limitations.

Co-location, networking and ‘buzz’

From the early 1990s, the co-location of creative industries and workers has risen to the attention of both academics and urban policy makers by the emerging concept of clustering (e.g. Porter, 2000). Clustering tendencies have been particularly visible in the field of cultural production and in creative work (Pratt, 2008b). The emergence of countless industrial and particularly creative clusters indicate that, even in a globally connected era (c.f. Cairncross, 1997), place is still important because local networks are grounded in particular places where culture is produced and consumed (Currid, 2007; Markusen, 1996).

The importance of networks is often associated with the increase in face-to-face, project-based working, which is especially prevalent in the creative industries (Currid, 2007; Grabher, 2002a, 2002b; Neff et al., 2005). This project-based working often takes place in third places (Oldenburg, 1989), such as lunchrooms and pubs located in the vicinity of offices and studios. In these places, creative workers are exposed to their peers, ideas and the appropriate norms and practices within a creative community (J. S. Brown & Duguid, 1991; Grabher, 2002a).

However, these places never become successful in isolation (Maskell, 2014), and networks are often not limited to one particular local ecosystem. In processes of knowledge creation, Bathelt and Cohendet (2014) suggest that for the creative industries, local and global dimensions are intrinsically interwoven. On the one hand, creative work is shaped by processes internal to local communities and organisations, such as ‘buzz’ (Bathelt et al., 2004) or ‘creative slack’ (Cohendet & Simon, 2007). By being exposed to all kinds of informal informative ‘noise’ and gossip, creative workers become aware of tacit knowledge, suitable potential project-members (see also Asheim et al., 2007) and the local and global rumours, impressions, recommendations, strategic misinformation and trade folklore (see also Pratt, 2002).

On the other hand, these processes are also entangled with linkages to external, often global, knowledge pools that generate inspiration and creativity. Such pipelines are strong or weak ties between firms or people that connect clusters with creative

and non-creative places around the world, making them nodes in multiple other production chains (Bathelt et al., 2004; Pratt, 2008b). These pipelines, we hypothesise, function as reputational pipelines, as these do not only allow the exchange of knowledge, but also a continuous awareness of – literally – one's place in the world. Therefore, we propose that co-location in a creative place – even in smaller cities – plays an intermediary role in connecting a creative worker's existing knowledge with the (tacit) knowledge of both the local ecosystem, as well as facilitating the linkages with larger networks of potential clients, customers or project members (e.g. the work on strong and weak ties of Granovetter, 1983).

The affordances of reputation

In the current global economy, urban place branding activities have soared, with cities competing to attract the ever-growing stream of visitors and global companies. Subsequently, many cities or areas have been labelled (by city marketers, policy makers, businesses or residents) as having a creative, innovative or knowledge-based image. Such branding endeavours are aimed at gearing urban local images towards specific audiences (Yigitcanlar, Guaralda, Taboada, & Pancholi, 2016). Research of Montanari, Scapolan and Mizzau (2018) confirms that such an image is important, as creative workers base their locational choices (partly) on expectations regarding a place's image. Subsequently, this (socially constructed) image, together with physical and structural aspects such as the historical heritage, look, ruggedness and grittiness (Andres & Golubchikov, 2016; Bain, 2003; Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010; Lloyd, 2002; Smit, 2011), influences the place's reputation: the consistent appreciation of its characteristics and amenities.

According to Scott (2000), creative clusters are idiosyncratic in the sense that each of them focusses on specific goods and services, and develops a distinct culture and reputation. At the same time, the success of a cluster also depends on its ability to transpose the local culture onto the global networks. The cultural and creative industries are thus, Scott (2000) argues, effective-

ly ingrained in different localities that host dense networks of mutually dependent SMEs through for instance networking and pitching events, trade fairs, arts festivals, game conferences and design weeks (see also Pratt, 2008b). New technologies also allow co-located workers to become more aware of their position in a global network of creative places.

Furthermore, the reputation of a place is expected to attract new creative workers, seeking to reap the benefits of these social externalities (Asheim et al., 2007; Drake, 2003). In the words of Maskell (2001):

“Already existing firms located elsewhere might be tempted to relocate [...] to the cluster because of the real or imagined advantages of getting better access to the local knowledge base or to the suppliers or customers already present. [A] dominant position will also attract entrepreneurs with ambitions to start firms in the particular industry” (pp. 932–933).

Another yet markedly different reputation related practice concerns the marketisation of creative goods and services, in which the creative image serves as a marketing tool for locally produced products and services (e.g. Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010; Scott, 1997). Molotch (1996, 2002), for example, states that being located in the proximity of an influential creative network may provide a ‘seal of quality’, and Currid and William’s (2010) research demonstrates that places of cultural production and consumption seek to be associated with branded locations within the city.

Similarly, Zukin (1995) argues that creative workers deliberately affiliate their brands or their products with their place’s heritage or the creative community they are located in – as I will also explain in the following chapter. Zarlenga, Ulldemolins and Morato (2016), emphasised that co-located gallery holders make locational decisions based upon consciously creating an image by associating with their local community. As a result, these gallery holders try to prevent the inflow of art galleries with a lower artistic level that could jeopardise the reputation of

the cluster's quality brand. Hence, in the words of Scott (2000): creative clusters are hubs of social reproduction where "*crucial cultural competencies are maintained and circulated*", but also are "magnets for talented individuals from other places who migrate to these centres in search of professional fulfilment and who in turn help to maintain local cultural energies" (p. 33).

In conclusion, clusters and co-working spaces house important local networks, but also maintain ties with other, global places. Therefore, creative workers seeking a workplace are often familiar with several local and global clusters, and base their locational decisions on the cues about these localities. However, even though it is generally accepted that reputation has an important influence on the success of co-located creative workers and the sustainability of a cluster by recruiting a viable inflow of new creatives, less is known about how creative workers negotiate their knowledge about different localities and how they include the reputation of places (and their 'residents') in their professional and creative decision-making processes.

What makes a specific place interesting, what are the roles of local and global networks, and how does this work in second and third tier cities without a global appeal? Finally, how do creative workers tap into the 'creative slack' and commodify a reputation in their work, and what value does this add to their creative products as well as to particular places? We hypothesise that the social prospects of co-location are a major influence on the decision-making processes in places without a global appeal. Therefore, these micro-processes that are often neglected in current spatial decision-making studies (Montanari et al., 2018) are the central focus of this chapter.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

This study builds on the 43 interviews with co-located creative workers as described in Chapter 1 (second cycle in-depth interviews). Respondents were interviewed about their locational decision-making, the expectations and experiences of co-lo-

cating with other creative workers. Our sample included eight locations in second and third tier cities⁴² in the Netherlands: Belcanto in Haarlem, BINK36 in The Hague, Creative Factory in Rotterdam, De Gruyter Fabriek in Den Bosch, De Vasim in Nijmegen, Dutch Game Garden in Utrecht, Klein Haarlem in Haarlem and Strijp-S in Eindhoven. These locations are very diverse in the sense that they range from central to more peripheral areas within the city, house fifty to five-hundred workers, are mono-disciplinary or include a wide variety of sectors – both creative and not so creative. We therefore adopted an embedded multiple case study design, in order to add to the robustness of our study (Yin, 2009). The diversity in cases assures a more balanced view, including places geared towards networking, and those that do not facilitate these services.

The respondents were asked about their ‘locational narratives’: the stories they tell about the relationship between place and their professional life. Particular attention was paid to the decision-making processes in the early years of their career, the decision to choose for their current locations, as well as their experiences as ‘residents’ in these places, and (hypothetical) future plans. Moreover, we inquired how they perceive and describe the local atmosphere, how their business contacts comment on their location and how they (aim to) present themselves to these contacts. Finally, the respondents reflected upon their social practices and interactions, as well as the knowledge they exchanged with their co-located peers.

The coding process was primarily semantic and inductive. Some 20 short pilot interviews with respondents from the same population preceded the 43 in-depth interviews, which functioned as the basis for initial theme formation. Recurrent themes in these pilot interviews were explored further through a literature review that resulted in the theoretical framework

42 We define second tier cities as cities outside of the capital whose economic and social performance affects the national economy (ESPON/SGPTD 2012 in Cardoso & Meijers, 2016), often having a population between 500.000 to 1.000.000 (Williams et al., 2015). A third-tier city has a population between 100.000 and 500.000 (Williams et al., 2015). All cases fit in either of the two categories.

above. The coding processes consisted of several rounds of open coding and axial coding, and eventually selective coding around the theme of reputation and the most prominent concepts in the literature (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Additionally, themes were refined and tested for internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

RESULTS

Local pipelines, global imagination

We are living in a globally connected era, in which firms are increasingly (internationally) interconnected, knowledge flows are impossible to contain in a locally demarcated area, and in which once far-away destinations are now at our fingertips. This 'space of flows' (Castells, 1989) points towards a global ecology of cities, in which co-located creative workers form an imagined community (B. Anderson, 1983) of creative spaces that compete for (creative) workers and firms (Florida, 2002), and local industries reimagining themselves as global players (Sanson, 2014).

Though contrary to what the 'death of distance' (Cairncross, 1997) inspired literature and the omnipresence of comparable creative clusters in the western world would suggest, our respondents were working and exchanging information in a mostly local (extended) network (comparable to what Castells (2012) considers the 'space of places'). Such a network existed often within their own location, in the neighbourhood or the immediate surrounding area, which is also the most prominent reason for respondents not having ambitions to relocate to more prominent cities like Amsterdam or abroad. A few respondents mentioned networks ranging from the local music scene [Sebastian, Music and visual and performing arts] to a national orientation (the Dutch game designers) [Thomas, Digital and entertainment media]. Working in an international network is, as Lucas [Music and visual and performing arts] explained, for his field less prevalent than working locally.

However, global pipelines did exist in a more symbolic form. Surprisingly, a symbolic relationship to other places was used by respondents for consciously connecting to a certain global culture that fitted their own desired image. Here, being part of such a global culture not only served as a means to participate in the relevant networks, but also for inspirational and marketing purposes. Respondents actively and explicitly referred to other, often notable creative places or global cities, particularly Berlin, New York and London. They used this as examples of how the reputation of their location could grow and how the most creative places often appear in certain derelict areas. This provided an appealing perspective:

“If [this cluster] wasn’t here, this would have been a neighbourhood for junks only. Because there’s more traffic now, and more people, the reputation gets better. East Berlin is the best example of this of course, yes, how you can make a derelict place into a good one” [Daniel, Crafts].

Being part of this ‘global imagined community’-like network (B. Anderson, 1983) of creative places provided inspiration and creativity, as well as legitimacy for their creative work in less evocative cities. Others stated that these creative metropolises are fashionable, and many customers or clients want to be associated with this, like the clients of Kim [Film, video and photography], who argued that “[My clients] want a bit New York, a bit meatpacking. You know. For that, this [place] is trendy.” Therefore, knowledge pipelines served much more often as sources of inspiration than as actual forms of collaboration. Respondents actively engaged in connecting the reputation of their location to that of other, more famous places.

However, we witnessed an almost reversed tendency when discussing other (creative) places in their vicinity. Almost all respondents mentioned such places, most often in the same city. Surprisingly though, the majority of respondents referred to nearby clusters in a negative tone, emphasising their lack of creativity, innovation or professionalism. Kim [Film, video and

photography] for example, described her relation to a nearby creative place in the following manner: "I thought about moving [to this other place], but I couldn't afford it. The units they offered were way too small. And yes eh, all those hipsters... [...] I prefer to belong to the creatives." We observed a negative relation between how long they have been working in a specific place, and their identification with other places, such as the evaluation of Monique [Arts and antiques] demonstrates:

"[A nearby creative cluster] was nice before, there was always something happening there. [But now] you don't hear anything anymore. At least, I hear nothing about [it]. It is what I said, it has become a bit lethargic. A bit boring."

This resonates with Scott's (2000) idea that creative clusters are idiosyncratic with a distinct culture and image. The longer the creatives worked at one specific place, the more they aligned their identity to that of their location. At the same time, however, they commodified the 'imagined community' of creative places. Even though these networks mostly appear to be locally oriented, global pipelines, real and imagined, do exist. Our respondents tapped into this global network of creative places for image building, inspiration and imagination, as well as for legitimation purposes.

The image as an asset

Accordingly, and in line with existing research, the reputation of a place was of importance to the local creative workers, also in second and third tier cities. Comparable to the larger metropolitan areas with well-established creative or entrepreneurial reputations, the places in our research, in these smaller cities, were adding symbolic value to the locally produced creative products and services by providing a legitimate narrative and access to an aura of creativity that would normally be out of their reach, as is explained by the following section on the commodification of place reputation.

Similar to the idea of idiosyncratic clusters mentioned above, it was not possible to pinpoint one specific 'perfect' image that would yield the optimal value in terms of a positive, attractive reputation. Different creative workers and clients appreciated different aspects of a place's potential image. Some respondents stated, for example, that they preferred their location to have a creative image, while others preferred a more professional image, and finally, a few mentioned the importance of being part of a 'cool' network.

We observed that creative image is especially important for the respondents working on the margins of the creative industries, such as in ICT design or those having a more administrative core task. These workers used their location in order to promote a creative image; an image they expected (and found) their clients to appreciate. In short, they capitalised on their co-located creative workers and especially artists to market their own services and products as more creative. Bjorn [Advertising] for example, noticed that it's easier to win projects: *"People are more inclined to choose for you. People find you more easily. When you talk about [this location], people say, oh yes, that's creative, you know."*

Next to the creative image, other respondents preferred their location to have a more professional image. Being able to show that you are able to pay for a professional office or studio is an important sign of being a proficient creative worker. These respondents were, in many cases, more on the artistic side of the creative industries, such as photographers and those working in the fine arts. In such a situation, they felt that an unprofessional image would harm their own reputation and would jeopardise contact with their potential commercial customers. These creatives often preferred to associate themselves with the more professional networks in order to be able to communicate a more professional image to their clients. Kim [Film, video and photography] explained this in the following way:

“There is an organisation that rents offices to artists for only half of the original price. I don’t really like that, because they are not as commercial and use taxpayers’ money to lie on the ground naked and make some pictures there. [...]. I’m fine with that you do this, but just pay the full price for it, just like I do, [my neighbour] does and everyone else does. I think that is a little eh, bad for our reputation.”

In sum, explicit association with a place to create a professional or creative reputation is strongly related to the networked image other workers use to promote their services and products. Being able to show that one is part of a well-regarded in-group impresses peers, clients and business contacts, and adds symbolic value to the work. These places have become a local networked “*institution, everyone knows where the cluster is located*” [Alex, Film, video and photography] and what it entails. Consequently, being part of a networked place is being part of a ‘cool place’ (Pratt, 2002), or, in the words of Thomas [Digital and entertainment media]: “*The big buildings and visibility and being part of a very large network of people, that has a certain coolness factor.*” In the absence of the global metropolitan creative appeal, the network of the ‘local cool’ thus serves as a distinguishing appeal of creative places in ‘ordinary’ cities (see also Champion, 2010).

Image and reputation as pull-factors

Evidently, the reputation of a creative collaborative workplace is primarily influenced by the creative workers it houses and has housed in the preceding years. We observed that the presence of other workers as well as the possible positive effects of existing social networks are among the most prominent reasons why the respondents made the decision to locate in a particular place. As the vast majority of creative workers are working on a freelance (Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010) and often project basis (Grabher, 2002a, 2004), the prospect of being part of a network is highly attractive and considered a valuable asset to their creative work. Mark [Software and electronic publishing], for example, explicitly mentioned the importance of this network:

“I once went to a lecture here in this building, so I already knew it before I moved here. And there were [...] many people working in the same sector as I do, and they were all located in this building. [...] That’s why I liked [this place].”

For Mark, and similar to the arguments of Banks et al. (2000), co-location provided access to relevant potential collaborators and networks of knowledge exchange. Many of the interviewees corroborated this expectation in their narratives about their locational decision-making histories, such as Kathryn [Designer fashion], who wanted to be surrounded by creatives because she *“[...] just like[s] being amongst other creatives where you can, possibly, cooperate with. Even if it’s just meeting people in the bicycle parking and just have a chat.”*

Being able to be part of a creative community is an important motivation: respondents frequently highlighted that they find it incredibly important to be able to ‘be yourself’ and to surround themselves with likeminded creatives. Here, the access to the ‘buzz’ was a major factor for (re)locating to a creative cluster. This ‘buzz’, evidently ubiquitous in the larger, creative cities, is more difficult to find in second and third tier cities. As creative workers are dependent on this ‘buzz’, and in many cases, the availability of tacit knowledge for their professional and creative success, our respondents explicitly emphasised that, in their locational decision-making processes, they were explicitly focused on the local places that were considered to contain such an environment. Julia [Music and visual and performing arts] mentioned that such a creative reputation was highly important for her locational decision-making process:

“I knew that this was a fun place and a lot of things were happening here [...]. Why I have chosen this place? This is why I came back to the Netherlands [from working abroad]: to be among other creatives, because I was very isolated before. I was the only one doing creative work [...]. Now I am one of the many creatives. It is super inspirational.”

Interestingly, despite this importance of being surrounded by creatives, Julia was located in one of the smaller cities in our sample, a city that was, according to the respondents and even more than some other cities in the sample, not known as particularly creative. The (local) creative reputation of the workplace was essential here: non-creative companies, shops and especially chain stores were not always welcomed in such locations. Many interviewees emphasised that they certainly would not want chain stores in their vicinity, as this diminished the uniqueness and cultural appearance of the area. They explicitly referred to endeavours to keep a national bagel bakery franchise and major supermarkets away from their creative clusters. Curating and preserving the creative 'local cool', these respondents argued, contributed both to their own inspiration as well as conveying a certain, beneficial image. Sebastian [Music and visual and performing arts] emphasised this by stating:

"Look, everyone who visits us thinks: wow, man, this is really like East Berlin, or eh, that feeling, you know. And that eh, that remains just so cool for me. [...] I think it is a beautiful building. And that feeling, every time I enter this place, I think, yes [in an enthusiastic voice], you know".

The effect of these networks on reputation and cluster sustainability was clearly visible in one of our cases that witnessed a period of decline before and during conducting the interviews. Here, insecurity about the future prospects of these places led to the departure of several tenants. In the words of Louis [Design]:

"Because the future of this building [as a creative cluster] is insecure, there was no inflow of new people at all. And people that found it difficult, having such an insecure future, they left. So yes, it's only a very small club of people that remained."

This obviously had a very negative effect on the place's reputation, as Rachel [Design] argued:

“For a while we had a community manager, that was fantastic! She just arranged things, people came to this place and she showed the outside world who we were. But since she is gone, this just didn’t happen at all. Everything just stays inside. And as long as no one knows that we’re here, no new tenants will come, and you won’t find the atmosphere that this place should have”.

Hence, the networks evidently have a significant impact on creative workers. They provide a place with a matching and attractive reputation that is essential for cluster sustainability. As creative workers are often actively pursuing the relevant creative atmospheres, ‘buzz’, and vicinity of noteworthy other firms and individuals, the prospect of co-locating in such a place is vital in their choices. This inflow is regulated by the place’s networks. Through these networks, contacts with other (local) creatives are established and maintained, spreading and affirming the reputation of the workplace, and invigorating the local ‘buzz’. However, when places obtained the reputation of diminishing ‘buzz’ or creativity, this immediately was reflected in the decreasing contentment of existing, and stagnating attraction of new creative workers. Therefore, in order to survive in the global community of creative places, in which there is a persisting appeal of other – global and local – creative cities and clusters, a positive reputation, and thus a sustained inflow of new creatives, is paramount. Outside of the famous creative and metropolitan cities, being close to the local cool is crucial for both the success of creative workers as well as their localities.

CONCLUSION

Building upon 43 coded interviews with creative workers in the Netherlands, this chapter focussed on the reputation of creative places and co-working spaces in second and third tier cities. It is well-known that major metropolises, such as Amsterdam, Paris, Berlin, New York and London, have an enormous attraction on creative workers and artists (Boix, Hervás-Oliver, & Blanca,

2015). Even outside these cities, however, they tend to co-locate; to work in the close vicinity of other creatives. Also in smaller and the traditionally less 'creative' cities, such as Den Bosch and Rotterdam in the Netherlands, places with a specific creative reputation have mushroomed. How does such a reputation arise in places that do not naturally or historically have such a strong attraction, and how does this interact with the existing and developing networks of creative workers and artists?

With this chapter, we have aimed to explore a field that has so far lacked investigation (Petridou & Ioannides, 2012). A rich quantity of work has been published on metropolises, capitals and the quintessential creative cities, but little is known how these aspects play out beyond the global metropolises (P. Collins & Cunningham, 2017). Our research indicates that, despite the often applauded and intensifying influence of the networked information society or the so called 'space of flows' (Cairncross, 1997; Castells, 1996), most respondents worked and remained in their 'space of places', confined to their local territories, histories and networks. Yet, place reputation is nevertheless strongly tied to both local and global networks. Remarkably, many respondents argued that they felt part of a global community of creative places, not in the form of formal or informal cooperation, but mainly through tapping into the narratives of existing (international) creative clusters. This indicates a form of pipeline that is not dictated by interactions, collaborations, formal networks (Bathelt et al., 2004; Maskell, 2014), or places in production chains (Pratt, 2008b), but rather an imagined connection to a global web of places. Other local places, however, were often denounced as less inspiring or less creative, which indicates that even within smaller cities, several place related narratives exist, in which the 'residents' aim to absorb and propagate the specific symbolic values their own cluster offers.

Evidently, and in line with the vast amount of work on locational decision-making practices of creative workers (e.g. Currid, 2007), creatives appreciated the reputational aspects of working in a cluster: the creative, professional or networked image. Here, co-locating with other creatives is a matter of status.

We observed that this held for co-locating with creative SMEs and freelancers in general, and not only for larger prominent firms. As the first step for many creative workers and artists is often working from their homes (similar to the work of e.g. Merkel (2015) and Spinuzzi (2012)), being able to pay the rent for an office, studio or unit in a clustered building is a step up – even if it is in an ‘ordinary’ city. It provides a seal of quality (Molotch, 1996, 2002) that could, depending on the place and the type of work, be creative and/or professional. The findings suggest that workers in the more core creative sectors (in the model of Throsby, 2008) are looking for a slightly more professional atmosphere, whereas those doing more traditional work seek the creative edginess to profile their company.

In order to sustain their reputation, the proximity or inflow of less prestigious companies and chain stores was not appreciated; being part of a unique local cultural network, grounded in a specific place, was considered key to being a serious creative worker or artist. This unique brand is propagated in their presentation, for example, by explicitly using the reputation for their own branding practices in referring to their (co-)working space on their websites, or in conversations with potential clients or business contacts. This suggests that the notion of ‘place in product’ (Molotch, 2002), which is, like the majority of work on place reputation, confined to the ‘single’, ‘extraordinary’ city (Amin & Graham, 1997), can be applied to the ‘ordinary’ city as well. In such places, these efforts took the shape of emphasising the workers’ place as a node in a global network of renowned places. This subsequently strengthened the location’s reputation and attracted new creatives seeking to be part of this network. Reputation, in this sense, contributes to and affects the life cycle of these clusters (cf. Martin & Sunley, 2011).

In conclusion, creative workers and artists in ‘ordinary’ or second and third tier cities are, as they lack access to the symbolic capital of world cities and creative cities, probably even more dependent on co-locating. With ‘buzz’ and the relevant networks localised in particular, sometimes linked, yet often competing places within the city, creative workers commodify

these places' affordances in actual networking and absorbing the local 'buzz', as well as for branding purposes. Through this branding and networking, the reputation was performed and spread throughout the city and further, which facilitated the attraction and retention of creative workers, ensuring the cluster's viability and sustainability.

DISCUSSION AND LIMITATIONS

All cases in this study are situated in second and third tier cities. The Netherlands, however, is rich in creative clusters, with more or less all medium sized (and often small as well) cities housing at least one, but often more, of such endeavours. This might make locational decision-making more of a deliberate process similar to that what can be expected in the world's metropolises. Nevertheless, such second tier cities have other pull-factors than famous metropolises such as New York or Paris (J. Brown, 2015) and cities in other regions. Cross-national comparative research could reveal whether the findings from this study are also applicable elsewhere in the world, and how the findings from Haarlem and Den Haag relate to practices in for example London, Los Angeles and Berlin.

Additionally, the cases in this study have been limited to what Andres and Golubchikov (2016) call brownfields, or which are addressed as creative hubs (Evans, 2009) or breeding places (Peck, 2012). Even though the sample in this study is diverse in size, institutionalisation, funding, organisational structure and level of urbanity, all cases are loosely organised and production oriented. Such places are often less institutionalised than for example museum quarters (Mommaas, 2004) and other consumption-oriented places, and cannot be compared to such more centralised efforts.

Chapter 7

Situating post-industrial
creative workplaces

*Global aesthetics and local histories in
creative reuse*

INTRODUCTION

As described earlier in this dissertation, parallel to the legitimation of the cultural and creative industries in the 1990s, neglected industrial areas have become increasingly considered an urban amenity (cf. post-industrialism in Hutton, 2004), valuable for the creation of post-Fordist business and particularly for creative work. These sites were transformed (or ‘adaptively recycled’ (Dickinson, 2001)) to small office spaces and studios (Andres & Golubchikov, 2016; Hutton, 2006; Lloyd, 2002; Montgomery, 2003). At this moment, such small-scale clusters or brownfields can be found in former industrial constructions everywhere in Europe, the United States, Australia and beyond the Western world.

Similar to the earlier work on tourism (e.g. Chang, Milne, Fallon, & Pohlmann, 1996), creative clusters in urban heritage⁴³ too have a global/local nexus in how they are experienced and managed. Chang et al. (1996) observe two ideal-typical approaches to perceiving such heritage: a global, top-down, and a local, bottom-up development. The former would lead to a convergence of homogenous zones, duplicating success models of the leading metropolitan cities and compromising the local identities, whereas the latter implies that such creative clusters are idiosyncratic and ‘one of a kind’. Indeed, creative workplaces in industrial heritage seem to be surprisingly homogenous in their physical and social form. Throughout Europe, one can find similar cultural ‘hot spots’ that house creative workers in former factories, usually located at the urban fringes (Hospers, 2005), such as Kaapeli in Helsinki, La Friche de la Belle de Mai in Marseille and Flacon in Moscow, indicating a form of institutional isomorphism in their spatial and symbolic configurations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). At the same time, however, these places are appealing to their particular local cultural histories for boosting their symbolic capital and authenticity (Heebels & Van

43 With this, I refer to the physical remains of the industrial past (e.g. buildings), but also to the symbolic and cultural values connected to this past (Xie, 2015).

Aalst, 2010; Hutton, 2006; cf. Bourdieu, 1977), for example, by celebrating and spotlighting the unique historical details, and by (either bottom-up or top-down) building upon the local, historical narratives.

Therefore, taken at face-value, the global and local seem to oppose, but in reality, there seems to be much more of a negotiation between different processes at stake. However, despite the growing volume of work on the reuse of industrial heritage in the creative industries (Bosák, Nováček, & Slach, 2018; Hutton, 2006; Rautenberg, 2012), little is known about how the balance between the homogenous, global orientation and the idiosyncratic local orientation is established and negotiated. A growing, cosmopolitan, translocal, (upper) middle class of creatives (cf. McRobbie, 2016) requires local authenticity in order to successfully position themselves in an progressively global market (cf. Cheyne & Binder, 2010). Hence, they are increasingly drawing upon local, idiosyncratic values for enhancing both their credibility as well as their inspiration (e.g. Drake, 2003; see Comunian & England, 2019 on local skills and inspiration). This research dives deeper in the processes of *authenticity work* (Peterson, 1999, 2005) of individual creative workers as well as the considerations of the organisations that aim to establish such pools of local authenticity. Yet, it also adds to the existing literature in the sense that it connects this *authenticity work* to a seemingly paradoxical situation of increasing isomorphism (cf. DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) in the ways in which such authenticity is constructed.

In this chapter, I will argue that the nexus between the global and local is an important driver in the shaping and development of the many creative workplaces that have mushroomed in the recent years. Especially in current day Europe and particularly in the Netherlands, where every small- to middle-sized city houses at least one of such places, competition is soaring, especially with a recovering economy driving up rental fees. In such a situation, being able to appeal to the global symbols, yet also doing justice to the historical value of the place may become crucial for success and sustainability. Therefore, I will explore

how locality is used and experienced by developers, managers and users (in line with e.g. Whiting & Hannam, 2017).

In particular, I focus on how they negotiate this seemingly paradoxical situation of adhering to the global aesthetics in creative and cultural work, while also navigating and commodifying the local (post-industrial) symbols and mythified histories (Rautenberg, 2012). In order to do this, I will first cover some theoretical considerations, including the development of post-industrial workplaces, the symbolic value of place and the production of authenticity. This is followed by a brief discussion of the data and methods employed. Then, I report on the results by discussing three themes: homogenisation, authenticity work and (hi)stories. Within each of these themes, the following ‘trinity’ will recur: 1] sensory experiences, 2] materiality and 3] the local history. This chapter ends with a conclusion and discussion.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Post-industrial urban aesthetics and the creative industries

Almost two decades ago, Scott (1997) observed that at the threshold of the twenty-first century, we are witnessing that “*capitalism itself is moving into a phase in which the cultural form and earnings of its outputs become critical if not dominating elements of productive strategy*” (p. 323). This development also finds spatial expression in the emergence of new metropolitan production spaces and thus in the ‘reconstruction’ of urban landscapes. Indeed, the twenty-first century city is no longer the manufacturing and production deprived area it was two decades ago. In fact, it has seen the return of extensive production districts, clusters of new industries, both spontaneous and policy invoked, and the reoccurrence of the comingling of social and working worlds (Hutton, 2006). Partly, this has been the result of speculative real estate developments and gentrification processes (Dickinson, 2001). The commercial redevelopments are driving increased land

values and the commercial development of new, often private consumption-oriented projects, such as the regeneration of the New Tobacco Warehouse in Tobacco Dock in London or the Liverpool waterfronts (Severcan & Barlas, 2007). However, the character of urban production sector has changed as well. The aesthetics and 'sign value' (Lash & Urry, 1994) of products have become inextricably connected to especially cultural and creative production, boosting the absolute and relative importance of the creative industries vis-à-vis other industries, and consequently their presence in the urban production districts.

The creative and cultural industries are attracted to the city, and in particular to the 'alternative', affordable workplaces in and around the city centre or the nearby fringe. This fringe is a transitional zone where small and medium sized businesses can take advantage of the value of centrality without paying the traditionally high rents of the city centre. It is often these areas that act as incubators for new, post-Fordist economic activities. The low rental fees, often short-term contracts and the high amount of sub-letting led to the development of dense networks that allow both old and new businesses to survive and grow (Banks et al., 2000). Yet, it is not the low rents alone that attract creatives: such places also appeal to the 'artistic habitus' afforded by the older industrial, historical aesthetics (Grodach et al., 2014).

The growing higher educated, middle class and culturally competent (e.g. Eikhof & Warhurst, 2013) 'neo-bohemia' especially appreciates such symbolic spaces and industrial aesthetics (Lloyd, 2002). For these translocal creatives⁴⁴ (especially the more artistic sub-sector working of the creative industries) tastes have become increasingly global. This results in a situation in which objects and experiences are especially meaningful when they are connected to an (authentic) place. In other words: especially because such tastes have strong global connotations, rooting them in the local – in particular specific places – has become increasingly important (Maly & Varis, 2016; Michael, 2015).

44 I.e. individuals, usually freelancers or SMEs working in the creative industries, see Chapter 1 or e.g. the mapping documents of DCMS (2001) for the most common definition.

In the case of post-industrial workplaces, according to Hutton (building on Markus, 1993), a distinctive attraction of these local historical buildings as a creative workplace lies in the structural soundness and engineering of the building. Hutton distinguishes the appeal of heritage structures in their physical configuration, durability and embedded construction qualities, as well as their appeal of historical imagery. The ‘material’ desirability of old industrial buildings can be explained by the external building scale and style, internal building configuration and ‘microscale’ features, including decorative details and motifs, and the potential for ‘personalisation’ of the creative workplace (Hutton, 2004, 2006).

However, this contemporary appreciation of post-industrial urban aesthetics, be it in lofts, workplaces or decoration, may seem to adhere to a long-term historical narrative of preserving historical buildings. Yet, this is a fairly recent development. In fact, for much of the twentieth and earlier centuries, industrial and domestic buildings have explicitly been separated, drawing upon different modes of design and décor. Much of this changed in the 1970s, in which the industrial aesthetic became increasingly ‘domesticated’. What Zukin (1982) calls ‘loft living’ highly contributed to this change, not only in this adoption of the industrial aesthetic style of dwelling, but also – similar to the observations of Hutton (2006) – in the spatial configurations of such spaces, by allowing the use of bulky manufacturing-oriented furniture and objects. However, the sentimental appreciation of such industrial design goes, according to Zukin, hand in hand with a sense of delusiveness, connecting to, at least symbolically, a yearning for a nostalgic, cognitively ‘more manageable’ past (Zukin, 1982).

Symbolic value of industrial heritage

The industrial developments have had a tremendous effect on the space and built form of the inner city. It has demarcated a nascent industrial space upon the broader spatial structure of the inner city, and consequently conveyed a sense of territoriality and identity for new clusters and firms. Similarly, the nature

of landscape and urban-design features, such as streetscapes, meetings, parks, open spaces facilitated contact-intensive operations of inner-city industrial ensembles. The configuration and style in building types represented within such heritage have been paramount for such symbolic development as well, allowing a functional continuity (see e.g. Markus, 1993) of historical building types by providing adaptable industrial work-live forms. Finally, and most pertinent for this research, it allowed the resonance of specific landmarks, institutions and structures that embody historical associations (Hutton, 2006).

This emphasises the uniqueness of inner-city places, reinforcing a sense of the local for those firms and actors which value such attributes. Especially creative workers might feel affinity with these forms of association, as they, in their work, often incorporate the imageries of the coexistent past and present, as well as the tangible and the symbolic (Hutton, 2006). In this, therefore, places are not only features in the narratives of individual actors, but they become narratives in their own right, promoting their own mythologies, values and local histories (Rodman, 1992). These nostalgic places have been hotbeds of what is called the ‘symbolic economy of cities’, whose space and symbols are “*both a currency of commercial exchange and a language of social identity*” (Zukin, 1995, p. 24).

The symbolic influence of spatial forms on creative entrepreneurial production strongly resonates in the previous chapter, as well as in the work of e.g. Heebels and Van Aalst (2010), who highlighted that the place in which a creative firm is located is of high importance – especially its look and feel. Such aesthetics were mainly of symbolic value for the creative workers, with especially the authenticity of the buildings being considered important. Heebels and Van Aalst (2010) also found that some respondents used specific elements of the area in which they were located in their work. This resonates with Jacobs’ famous idea that that old, low-value buildings are critical for small scale entrepreneurial businesses (1962), and that the aesthetic curiosity of creative city dwellers vigorously fosters innovativeness (J. M. Jacobs, 1985). Helbrecht (2004) underscores Jacobs’

notion of aesthetic curiosity as a stimulus to innovation. She also emphasises the importance of non-representational space in the exchange of tacit knowledge, which is more easily transferred or shared in the localised, bounded spaces within the city than elsewhere.

Therefore, evidently, the look and feel of an urban place play a significant role in the knowledge production processes in the creative industries. This symbolic value fuels the cultivation of a cultural image, making the area more competitive (see e.g. the description of Poblenou presenting itself as “Barcelona SoHo” in Gdaniec, 2000). In a similar vein, in the previous chapter (Wijngaarden, Hitters, & Bhansing, 2019a), I argued that creative workers – in line with the translocality described above – tend to refer to notable global creative cities when describing their own location, both in order to strengthen their artistic images as well as for gaining inspiration simply by associating themselves with this global culture.

Industrial heritage is thus symbolic in character. It is deeply tied to a spatial sense of belonging and memories (Francis, 1987). Indeed, ‘our grandfathers’ factories’ have increasingly taken on historical and symbolic value after they have become objects of disuse (Zukin, 1982). As a result, the built environment has not nearly disappeared as rapidly as the industries have in the urban areas in the late twentieth century. Instead, many buildings found through, what Dickinson (2001) calls the “*adaptive recycling of industrial space*” (p. 47): a new, often creative use. This ‘re-enchantment’ of industrial heritage which was first put into practice successfully in cities like San Francisco through preservation measures, was successively copied in many other places. While in these places the physical context is of course different in each setting, the interpretation of such reuse seems to be rather homogeneous, appealing to a translocal, middle-class culture (Zukin, 1982).

Producing authentic places in a global world

As already mentioned above, the emergence of the industrial design aesthetic has not been limited to the artistic, metropoli-

tan cities of the United States. On the contrary, much of these symbolic and historical aesthetics have also been exported to elsewhere in the world. In fact, throughout the world, one can find a surprisingly large number of rather similar post-industrial converted workplaces that seem to mimic the loft living approach (Zukin, 1982). This homogenisation of creative workplace design raises the question whether there is a process of isomorphism going on in this field, in which organisations, or in this case, spatial configurations, are increasingly growing similar. Once a field becomes more established, it pushes towards homogenisation, and once organisations are developing as an actual field, especially mimetic forces emerge that make them become increasingly identical. In this, organisations tend to model themselves after successful and legitimate existing organisations (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). Similarly, while all examples above explicitly refer to a local past or heritage legitimisation, and with places differing in socio-demographic, geographical, (sub-)sectoral attributes (Grodach et al., 2014), the overall structure remains alike. The striking resemblance of such places evokes the question of the individuality of such places.

Of course, taking a broader perspective, this homogeneity can be explained by the increasing connectedness of spaces. Spaces are linked, and production is not tied to one locality, but is connected through a network of global interaction stages and locations (Castells, 1996). Such a global ecology accentuates the persisting and even amplifying importance of cities (Sassen, 1994). Nevertheless, the importance of local places has not diminished. On the contrary, local identity and history has become key in the globalised world and economy. The 'death of distance' (Cairncross, 1997) has led to a 'global sense of place' (Massey, 1994), in which distinction and uniqueness have become attractive assets in the cultural economy (Gdaniec, 2000). This is evidently visible in the locational decision-making processes of the translocal creative workers, who are strongly attracted to the visual and symbolic character of a space (Smit, 2011). Most importantly, Smit (2011) argues, they appreciate 'distinctive' characteristics – their area needs to be different

from the ‘mainstream’. However, what constitutes the ‘mainstream’ when the ‘alternative’ spaces seem to adhere to a strong tendency of aesthetic standardisation, seemingly just endowed with a halo of individual local and creative distinctiveness?

This distinctiveness, as well as the attraction to the local, historical features of the building(s) point towards a strong connection to the notion of authenticity. Places and traditions claiming authenticity are obviously not a new phenomenon, with efforts to brand places or products going back to the eighteenth century (Hobsbawm, Ranger, & Press, 1992). In this, authenticity is seen as something original, true or real (Peterson, 1999), and recognised as such by the relevant entities (Peterson, 2005). What is particular to the creative industries is that the success of a product often depends on the appearance of authenticity. Yet, Peterson (1999, 2005) argues here that such authenticity is not (always) occurring ‘naturally’, but rather that it is fabricated or created in social and organisational practices through what he calls *authenticity work*.

In this work, actors (sometimes unconsciously, often unnoticed) engage in the interpretation of authenticity, “*giving or receiving the impression that someone or something is authentic, genuine or real*” (Gubrium & Holstein, 2016, p. 123). This materialises under certain *auspices*, offering the parameters and preferences of what goes as authentic, and what does not. In doing *authenticity work*, one can pick several tools from this toolbox, including (but not limited to) making direct claims of authenticity and manoeuvring in privileged position (being on the right place on the ‘scene’) (Gubrium & Holstein, 2016). Another strategy in this is connecting to the cultural theme or context of a place, identity or history (Cheyne & Binder, 2010; Peterson, 1999). Though Peterson’s and Cheyne and Binder’s work refers to (country or hip-hop) music, similar considerations are also present in other forms of space branding. As the abundance of publications on place branding suggests, cities and regions have spent ample time and effort to construct their places as ‘authentic’. Often, this – again – is done by playing off the singular elements of the area’s past and associated values (D. Jones & Smith, 2005;

Zukin, 2011). Nevertheless, also individual creative workers can engage in such practices by aiming to commodify the symbolic values a particular place offers.

DATA COLLECTION AND METHODS

To understand the seemingly paradoxical situation sketched above, I am drawing upon empirical fieldwork gathered in a multiple holistic case study design (Yin, 2009), with seven creative shared workplaces⁴⁵ throughout the Netherlands: BINK36 in The Hague, Creative Factory in Rotterdam, Strijp-S in Eindhoven, Klein Haarlem in Haarlem, Hazemeijer in Hengelo, De Vasim in Nijmegen and De Gruyter Fabriek in Den Bosch. Each of these workplaces have been housed in transformed historical buildings, most notably of an industrial nature (with the exception of Klein Haarlem, which used to be a school). These cases are quite alike in their aesthetics, with an emphasis on 'raw', 'authentic' and 'historical' materials and artefacts. Many of these locations have also received subsidies from public funding, either on the European, regional, municipal level, or through publicly funded housing associations or investment funds.

However, the cases differ on many other levels, with two being in the second and third city of the Netherlands, and others being located much more in the peripheries. They also differ in size, with Strijp-S and to a lesser extent De Gruyter Fabriek housing hundred(s) of (creative) workers, and Klein Haarlem only some 40. Also in the level of renovation and organisational development they diverge, with some locations having a much higher finishing level and others being more gritty and in need of maintenance and investments. In their development, most of the locations have been developed in a top-down manner, instigated by for example a housing association or the municipality, yet some more mixed forms and one clearly bottom-up (former squat) case is also among the sample. I conducted 37 interviews with creative workers located in the seven workplaces. The interviews were transcribed and analysed using a grounded

45 Also called creative clusters (Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010), creative hubs (Virani et al., 2016) or creative brownfields (Andres & Golubchikov, 2016).

theory inspired approach (Charmaz, 2001; Strauss & Corbin, 1990), with initial extensive open coding, followed by axial coding along the emerging themes, and finally, selective coding.

RESULTS

Homogenisation: global industrial aesthetics

For nearly all respondents, the aesthetics of their post-industrial office or workplace were tremendously important, with many explaining that they found the looks of the workplace to be a major, if not decisive factor in their locational decision-making considerations. In this, they – as described above – referred to how the *histories* were embedded (in the broadest sense of the word), the *materiality* and how the place connected to their own *sensory* experiences.

First, what is visible in all cases is a form of *local, historical* authenticity. The respondents explicitly referenced to either creativity, industrial aesthetics and heritage, or the local histories of the building. They also performed (Goffman, 1959) these histories in a surprisingly similar way. For example, out of the seven cases, four referred to the names of the former industrial usage of the factory or the company owning the factory. Two referred in more abstract terms to creativity and industrial heritage, by both calling themselves the Creative Factory (one in Dutch, and one in English). The Dutch version – Creatieve Fabriek – was later renamed to Hazemeijer Hengelo. Paul, the manager and director of Hazemeijer Hengelo explains this by underlining the importance of the (former) company for the city. They wanted to connect to this past, because it was particularly notable and symbolically charged. Another location, De Vasim, used a ‘sub-title’, calling themselves a culture spinning mill, as it used ‘spin’ artificial silk (nylon). As such, the managers and developers of these locations – in a rather universal way – explicitly sought to capitalise on the local symbolic capital. Clearly, authenticity was literally *claimed* by making a reference to historical symbols or values.

In some cases, respondents were attracted to certain places because the *material* assets fitted their own identity: “*we are a business from Rotterdam [a working class harbour city], we are straightforward and a bit more raw than others, and this building fits well. Industrial and no frills [no marble], but cracked concrete*” [Louis, Design]. In general, concrete floors turned out to be a source of inspiration for many. A surprising number of respondents brought this up, as Kim [Film, video and photography] explained: “*It makes me happy, the floor, for example, it’s really beautiful. [...] We photograph a lot of artists, and you really have to be careful, because you can’t use the floor all the time, because it’s so recognisable.*” Others, such as Heidi [Arts and antiques], referred to the material history of the building, proudly showing guests around,

“I’ll show you, it is fun. Look what they did in the past, because the machines here were very heavy and probably even drove around, they just poured it full with concrete and pushed these iron tiles in. And they can never be removed.”

In general, these authentic details were something respondents usually appreciated, and felt the need to preserve them. They all referred to, comparable to the concrete, surprisingly similar attributes, such as pulleys, steel beams and silos.

Finally, in terms of *sensory* experiences, a majority of respondents brought up the sheer size of such spaces, providing a sense of openness that can hardly be equalled in office buildings elsewhere. Such spaciousness provided, literally, “*spaces where you can get new ideas, grasping some fresh air*” [Charlie, Film, video and photography], a wide variety of possibilities for adaptations such as building an additional floor, or because it made the respondents “*a bit calmer*” [Mark, Software and electronic publishing]. In any case, it provided “*a different perspective on working than staying in a cubicle with isolated windows*” [Thomas, Digital and entertainment media].

Authenticity work: negotiating global creative symbols and local orientation

There was a great deal of *authenticity work* (Peterson, 1999, 2005) going on in the post-industrial creative workplaces. The vast majority of respondents constructed their authenticity by distinguishing themselves from other places. Again, the ‘trinity’ was visible here as well: 1] respondents *sensed* reluctance to work in ‘ordinary’ office buildings, 2] they used their *material* surroundings to stand out in comparison to other, local creative places, and 3] they employed their *local histories* in order to sell themselves to potential clients and other actors.

Most prominently, a large number of respondents rejected the idea of having to surround themselves with the features of ‘ordinary’ offices. Quite contrary to the spaciousness evoking inspiration, they claimed: *“I don’t want to work in an ordinary office, because then I won’t be able to get anything done”* [pilot interview, Strijp-S]. It also helped the respondents to distinguish themselves from others, especially those on the more business side of the creative industries. For example, they stated that they *“felt like a dime in a dozen”* [pilot interview, Hazemeijer Hengelo] in more ordinary office buildings, and that they wanted to distinguish themselves from those working in an office where they would just be *“a spoke in the wheel”*. They especially used dropped or grid ceilings as an example of workplaces they wanted to avoid. As Louis [Design] emphasised: *“I really don’t even want to think about working somewhere with a grid ceiling. It gives so much more eh, how do you call it, inspiration than a eh more boring office environment.”*, and more generally: *“everything smooth with a grid ceiling, that’s not for me. It just doesn’t have a character”* [Linda, Advertising]. The ‘character’ of uniqueness too was something that was continuously brought up, like James [Music and visual and performing arts] did: *“it is quite unique, there isn’t much you can compare it with. It is hard to categorise what this space is.”*

Nevertheless, there were clear indications of authenticity work vis-à-vis other creative places as well. A profound pattern was that a large group of respondents discussed other local creative workplaces using a rather negative tone. Important here

is that these places, in the words of the respondents, betrayed their post-industrial past in a *material* sense, for example, by saying that they have become too modern and that they lost their authentic raw industrial design. Quite a few respondents used the word ‘*kapotgerenoveerd*’ for this observation: destroyed by renovation. As Lucas [Music and visual and performing arts] vividly described a nearby creative post-industrial conversion:

“they demolished it up until the carcass. Only the concrete elevator was still standing, and it just turned into a newly built building. And then I think, this is just not what... this is lying about what you want with the building. I think it has to stay like this and that it shouldn’t become a hyper modern building. You should be able to see the oldness, and though you can make new hyper-modern parts [...], it has to remain industrial. I find that very important.”

Quite to the contrary, the imperfectness of the place was often embraced, for example, by Andreas [Design], who emphasised that *“it isn’t perfect, but that’s the charm.”*

In this, similar to what Chang et al. (1996) describe in the tourism sector, *material* industrial assets have been an important factor in attracting and to a lesser extent maintaining clients. Surprisingly, these aesthetics especially seem to refer to international clients, who *“feel the energy too”* [pilot interview, De Gruijter Fabriek]. However, also for local clients, it is a great ‘business card’, especially considering that in many cities *“there aren’t many of these enormous factory buildings like this one”* [Lucas, Music and visual and performing arts]. They seem to be more inclined to visit, as they are curious about the interior and the story of the building, and especially those that know the histories seem to be fascinated by the locality. As a respondent highlights: *“It makes the building look different from a normal office building. This also works for clients; they see the histories when they visit. This is valuable”* [pilot interview, Strijp-S].

Therefore, similar to what was described in the previous chapter, the *local history* was employed in order to distinguish

themselves from other places. Most prominently, with Amsterdam being by far the most prominent creative city in the Netherlands, many respondents from the seven cases (which did not include any from Amsterdam) referred to Amsterdam negatively, either because it had become too congested, or aiming to demonstrate that they are at least as good: “*we will show Amsterdam how you do it*” [Abel, Advertising]. However, they also explicitly mentioned places outside of their own geographical vicinity for the sake of distinction, yet, in a fully different form. Many respondents referred to global creative metropolises or notable creative clusters in order to strengthen their own local, creative image, as described in the previous chapter. Particularly (East) Berlin, New York and London were mentioned often, though they sometimes referred to smaller creative post-industrial workplaces as well, for example, in Lille or Stockholm.

Local histories, universal stories

A striking pattern in the narratives of both the creative workers as well as the managers is the paradoxical nature of their local histories. While at the one hand, these histories are being employed with the aims of highlighting the uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of the place, yet at the same time, all seven histories bear such striking resemblance that one can almost speak of a Campbellian (1949) ‘mono myth’. Again, I observed the three themes in such historical narratives: *sensory* histories, *materialised* histories and *localised* histories.

The *sensory* histories refer to the persisting presence of workers in the building, and the re-enactment of industrial work. This theme has been particularly prominent, with a very large number of respondents bringing up one or more of such stories. Timothy [Advertising] summarises the meaning of such a history by saying that “*the building has already been lived, and you are allowed to be a temporary resident*”. A large number of respondents tried to connect their experiences to their physical closeness to earlier users of these buildings, forming a bond of solidarity or being inspired or fascinated by their lives. For example, Heidi [Arts and antiques], wondered how “*these people must have felt and*

how that, when women were getting married and were fired... these kind of things. I really like to know that." Others, such as Linda [Advertising] vividly contemplated that:

"the place where we are sitting now, thousands of people just have been working extremely hard here. Blood, sweat and tears to make Philite, for example, that stuff and the conveyor belts were here, and people had to cry and toil, you know. They had to work hours, hours, hours on Saturdays even. Yes, then I think, wow that is weird. Who else has been looking through these windows?"

Though explicitly acknowledging the suffering that must have been happening in the industrial era, some respondents, like Dennis [Advertising], also considered – quite similar to the ‘re-enchantment’ and romantic notion of the past as described by Zukin (1982) – that

"we here are continuing an industrial revolution. This story has a very nostalgic nature or very romantic, but it's there. The idea that in this space where you and I are sitting now, in the past 30, 40 people were working, in the same space, with the cacophony and the noise. And that you as an entrepreneur want to contribute to the success of a city and that you do this in a space where people in the past did this too."

This contribution to society was exemplified in the following way too: *"very important things have been thought out and made here for the people and society, and you're going to the same toilets as these people. You feel this"* [Bjorn, Advertising]. However, despite the successes and suffering, other respondents, such as Eric [Software and electronic publishing] also learned valuable lessons through the history of the company:

"I find this industrial building inspiring, in the sense that you taste the past. But I also like it, yes, it's a nice comparison to the past that can be made here: this building was used by De Gruyter [a former Dutch supermarket and food manufacturer] that went

bankrupt in the 80s because they didn't innovate. And that is of course what I'm trying to live here. You know, you have to keep up with the times, because otherwise, at some point, your business will be ending."

The histories described above did not just manifest as 'felt' or 'experienced' by the respondents; they also appeared in a *material* form. First, as described above, much of these histories translated into the homogeneous industrial design incorporating concrete floors, steel beams and solid walls, but also in more distinctive artefacts with machines, silos and barrels particular to the production the place was purposed for. A particular example is the pneumatic tube system that appeared during renovations in one particular workplace, and whose presence has been of great influence in the workplace user's spatial design plans. Another pattern, perhaps not that surprising, was performing (Goffman, 1959) these histories by the usage of large historical photos within elevators, corridors, hallways or near the entrance, indicating the local history of the particular place. Instead of showing the imposing buildings in their industrial heydays, most of these highlighted the people working in the factories. For example, Mark [Software and electronic publishing] describes how he experienced this:

"they did this in a very cool way. In the canteen, there were these very large posters, a photo covering a full wall, black and white, showing the lads in the factory who worked there in the 1930s or so. That immediately... it just breathed a certain atmosphere."

A final form in which the historical nature of such buildings emerged was through localised histories. Obviously, both the sensory as well as the materialised histories are strongly rooted in the local culture. Yet, in some cases, this history was particularly tied to the history of the region, with the building representing the development of the larger city and beyond, such as Charlie [Film, video and photography] describes: "it radiates the history of Haarlem, so it is a building with a meaning." Dennis [Advertising] argues the following:

“I grew up in Eindhoven, so Strijp-S refers to my ‘roots feelings’, so to say. [...]. And for me, yes, Strijp-S is an area that refers to Philips, to PSV [the local football club (formerly) sponsored by Philips], where my neighbour used to work, which used to be fenced off and made you wonder: what actually happens there?”

Someone else continues this narrative, stating that ‘father’ Philips took care of everything in Eindhoven, from sports to recreation to healthcare. With the former two capturing mostly one city, some respondents, like Timothy, consider the historical influence of such buildings going much further, stating that the culture of Brabant [province in the south of the Netherlands, YW] and the place’s cultural historical value is important to him, so much that this is actually the reason he is located in his particular building.

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

This research was triggered by the observation that creative workplaces around the world – and within the Netherlands in particular – look and feel so similar, while also proclaiming to be strongly rooted in a specific locality’s symbolic and industrial past and culture. Despite a large number of studies addressing the influence of the local histories (Gdaniec, 2000; Hutton, 2006; Markus, 1993; Smit, 2011) and/or universal industrial aesthetics and symbolism (Grodach et al., 2014; Lloyd, 2002; Zukin, 1982), little is known about how the balance between the homogenous, global orientation and the idiosyncratic local orientation is established and negotiated. This has led to the question of how users and managers aim to balance the appeal to global ‘creative industries aesthetics’ for authenticity and symbolic capital, while at the same time adhering to the desires to preserve and sustain the local historical spaces and symbols.

In this, I observed that the global and the local in this context are far from mutually exclusive. In fact, they are mutually dependent and continuously feed into each other. In an increas-

ingly connected world (Castells, 1996) in which one's place in this network is evident (Massey, 1994), the standardisation of workplace design is becoming more significant. Respondents explicitly referred to global and local creative workplaces or cities to make sense of their own locations' symbolism and appeal. In this, there was a recurring emphasis on *sensory experiences*, *material aesthetics* and *local histories*. Despite working in different workplaces with distinct histories, details and symbolic values, respondents appreciated similar aspects of their workplaces, most prominently the abundance of concrete and the overwhelming size and openness of the buildings and workplaces. Also, in the developmental stages of such places, managers were evidently aware of the symbolic value of (partly) mimicking successful other creative places, as they assume that adhering to this aesthetic is beneficial and provides authenticity. This also resonates in the names they have chosen for the workplaces, which seem to follow a standardised format.

However, for many respondents, the distinctive features of their workplaces too served as a means to distinguish themselves from others, either from those working in 'ordinary offices' with 'grid ceilings' and 'no character', but also from other creative workplaces that they deemed lacking authenticity or creativity. This distinctiveness was also thought to appeal to clients, both by the local history, the aesthetics and by means of having 'something to talk about' as an icebreaker. In order to achieve such 'uniqueness', they drew upon their local histories in three different manners. First, such histories were *sensory* in the sense that respondents *felt* a 'persisting' presence of their predecessors, the labourers who used the same building, but experienced it very differently. This imbued the building with a sense of enchantment and symbolic capital. Second, this persistent presence was *materialised* by the users and managers by showing historical photos, posters and keeping specific details to visualise and communicate their local histories. This too served as means for (visual) inspiration and motivation (Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010; Smit, 2011). Finally, many respondents embedded their places' *history* in the broader local urban or even regional

histories, emphasising the importance of the particular place for the regional social and economic development.

What is surprising here, however, is that in such *sensory, materialised* and *local* histories, there was very little difference between the users and managers of the seven cases. Though they emphasised the importance of the local character and idiosyncratic details, they did this in remarkably similar ways. These unique characteristics were essential ingredients in the development of such spaces; yet, the overall recipe seems to be analogous. This clearly indicates strong mimetic isomorphic tendencies in this field (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). This was visible not only in aesthetics, but also in origin myths and in how the users experienced and communicated their locational narratives. Creative post-industrial workplaces draw upon individual local characteristics and histories, yet in order to cultivate a rather ‘pseudo-individual’ (Adorno & Simpson, 1941) workplace.

This has important implications for the managers and developers of such locations. First, this research highlights that, regardless the location, specific features of post-industrial design were appreciated. Second, though comfortable working conditions and facilities such as fast internet are important, too ‘smooth’ renovations were considered ‘unauthentic’. Maintaining the ‘raw and gritty’ look is essential in this. Third, encouraging and promoting the local history helps in attracting clients and inspiring the users’ creativity. However, as this research was built on seven, though quite diverse, cases confined to the Netherlands, future research could investigate whether these findings also hold cross-nationally. Furthermore, future research could delve deeper in the differences between how different organisational, historical, spatial, political and institutional factors influence the development and success of such post-industrial creative workplaces.

Chapter 8

“...flock together”

Conclusion

CONCLUSION

Birds of a feather flock together. Indeed, this seems true for many industries, thinking about, for example, the traditional wine cluster around Bordeaux, automobiles from Detroit or watches and knives from Switzerland. The creative industries especially have been subject to a wide range of research projects and policies, aiming to understand, justify, criticise and strengthen the co-location of creative firms and entrepreneurs. Why have clusters of creative industries received so much attention; how come they have been the topic of so many policy initiatives; why are they imagined to solve global societal problems? The answer to these questions can be summarised in one word: innovation.

The (co-located) creative industries are often considered as a forerunner of the post-Fordist economy; the knowledge economy defined by flexibility and its focus on creativity and innovative work practices. Especially these industries were supposed to bring the innovative ideas to the general economy and society. This principle inextricably linked the creative industries to innovation – a term that beforehand was most prominently applied to the STEM sectors. In recent decades, therefore, a school of thought emerged which anticipated the creative industries to provide important creative and innovative input for solving societal challenges – like the *Designing a Country* white paper (2014) quoted in the introduction – and the general economy. The creative industries too were expected to attract larger (innovative) firms and higher educated labour forces (catalysed by the famous yet contested work of Florida, 2002). As a result, many cities have pursued a strategy to attract the creative industries by investing in – or stimulating – co-location in, for example, creative business centres, creative hubs, creative clusters, ‘brownfields’, or co-working spaces. The rationale behind such investments is the hypothesis that co-location fosters the cross-pollination of innovative ideas (Bassett et al., 2002; Malmberg et al., 2005; Urry, 2002).

On the other hand, some researchers are much more sceptical about the agglomeration externalities, especially with regards to innovation. On the macro-level, Gordon and McCann (2005b) argued that the idea that agglomeration would immediately translate into innovative efforts is, in the best case, slightly naïve and lacking empirical support. Others, e.g. O’Connor (2004), Ben Letaifa and Rabeau (2013) and especially Boschma (2005) acknowledged that proximity could potentially facilitate interaction, but warned against a ‘lock in’ effect, with geographical closeness hampering rather than fostering innovativeness. On the meso- and micro-level, a number of authors emphasised that co-working is not necessarily working collectively, arguing, for example, that there is little evidence that co-location would drive innovations, or that co-working immediately (or at all) results in interactions and knowledge exchange (J. Brown, 2017; Fuzi, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012; Spinuzzi et al., 2019). Co-working, consequently, is dependent upon ‘curation’ by community facilitators in order to be collaborative (J. Brown, 2017; Fuzi, 2015; Parrino, 2015).

Therefore, while much has been written on innovation in general and in the creative industries, and in particular about the spatial aspects of innovation, the exact ways in which such innovation occurs and diffuses is extremely difficult to disentangle. Similarly, despite several policy initiatives to boost the opportunities for the creative industries, what makes them innovative is hard to define for such a diverse and broad sector. Understanding whether and how co-location contributes to the innovativeness of creative firms helps in developing effective policies and sustainable business models for the creative industries. This is especially urgent, as, over the last decades, investments in such spaces have been widespread. With the flourishing economy in Western Europe at this moment, it is likely that such clusters, often located in relatively neglected and affordable areas in the city, will soon feel – or are already feeling – the increasing pressure of rising rents, real estate brokers and gentrification trends (cf. the “cycles” of gentrification described by Zukin, 1982).

In this conclusion, I will address these issues by first (tentatively) answering the overarching research question. Next, I will summarise the general findings and highlight the academic contributions of this dissertation. In particular, I will focus on 1] relating the macro-level to the micro-level, 2] the *situatedness* of innovation, and 3] the forms of capital provided by collaborative workplaces. Thereafter, I will address some limitations and suggestions for future research. This conclusion – and therefore this dissertation – ends with discussing several practical implications of the findings.

So, does co-location contribute to innovation? And if so, how?

This brings me back to the overarching research question I have aimed to answer in this dissertation: (*how*) *does co-location contribute to the self-perceived innovative capabilities of freelancers and SMEs in the creative industries?* In order to do this, I have drawn upon and combined insights from several academic fields. Starting from (economic) geography, I have engaged with the claim that co-location (in clusters) has effects on the firms' innovativeness. Taking concepts such as 'buzz', face-to-face and tacit knowledge as a starting point, I aimed to disentangle how this mechanism works out on a micro-level, the level of the individual creative worker. Chapters 4 and 5 specifically demonstrated how tacit knowledge can be transferred through collegial behaviour and informal mentorships, and how such social settings develop in ritualistic daily rhythms. These mechanisms will be discussed more in-depth later on in this chapter.

Following the literature of (critical) labour studies, I connected the affordances of co-location to the working conditions in the creative industries, showing that especially for these industries, there is added value in co-working in order to compensate for the relatively precarious labour conditions. Concepts from (cultural) sociology, then, helped to shed light on the practices of creative workers in co-working spaces, both by providing tools for understanding interactions in workplaces, but also for gaining more insight into practices of distinction. The applica-

tion of these concepts onto co-working settings allows taking a closer look at the spatial attributes and limitations of *front-* and *backstage* boundaries, performances and rituals. This spatial perspective is highly indicative of social behaviour, yet often either overlooked or just addressed superficially in these contexts.

So, how does this relate to innovation? Does co-location indeed make creative workers more innovative? Considering the difficulties (or the impossibility) of actually *capturing* innovation in the creative industries, this question can only be answered tentatively. Taking these disclaimers into account, my answer would be: yes, but indirectly. Co-location does not necessarily lead to collaboration, and this collaboration only rarely sparks innovation. But does that mean that we should disregard this thesis altogether? I would say no. Co-location has a lot to offer – especially for a group that is highly dependent on project-based work, informal interactions, advice, authenticity and reputation – in order to compensate for limited on-the-job or even educational training in practical, more entrepreneurial skills, and to enhance one’s creative or professional credibility and reputation. By co-location, creative workers gain access to a ‘rich soup’ (Iammarino & McCann, 2006) of tacit knowledge.

Moreover, it also allows them to acquire a more credible professional or creative reputation, both by being able to tap into the almost universal – at least in the western world – appreciation of (post-)industrial aesthetics, as well as by the sheer proximity of other, well-regarded creatives. More specifically, this means that on this ‘middle-ground’ of creative collective workplaces, the symbolic global flows and local histories intersect and feed into each other, sparking new hybrid forms of aesthetic, spatial and spatial configuration. Creative workers interpret global styles and apply them in local settings, and surround themselves with aesthetics and other creatives in order to connect to the global city prestige. In itself, none of these factors directly contributes to innovation. Yet, in combination, they provide a fertile soil on which innovative ideas can grow (through informal help and tacit knowledge exchange) and eventually can be harvested and implemented (by having suf-

ficient creative or professional credibility to bring products or services to the market).

ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

From macro-developments and perspectives to micro-experiences

As mentioned above, a large body of research has been published on the intersection of place, innovation and the creative industries, originating from a wide variety of academic fields. In this dissertation, I have aimed to map some of the macro-perspectives on these topics, and apply these to the micro-level of individual creative workers. Moreover, much of this research has been guided by specific meso-level forms of organisation: collaborative workplaces in which individuals seek peer proximity while doing solitary work.

Classic economic geography literature emphasised the importance of concepts such as ‘buzz’, face-to-face interactions (e.g. Asheim et al., 2007; Bathelt et al., 2004; Currid & Williams, 2010; Storper & Venables, 2004), ‘noise’ (Grabher, 2002a), ‘something in the air’ (Crewe & Beaverstock, 1998), ‘milieux’ (Breschi & Lissoni, 2001; Hall, 2000; Maillat, 1998; Törnqvist, 2004) or localised knowledge spillovers (Krugman, 1997; McCann & Simonen, 2005), with many of such studies aiming to ‘measure’ such effects by looking at e.g. patents (Fischer, Scherngell, & Jansenberger, 2009; Maurseth & Verspagen, 2002) or inter-firm linkages (e.g. Bathelt, 2007). Yet, how these agglomeration externalities work out in the daily practices of (creative) workers, and how they themselves experience and negotiate such contacts with their co-located peers is rarely touched upon. In other words: while it is quite evident that *something* happens in what are usually called clusters of firms or freelancers, *what exactly* remains a pressing question.

What I have aimed to do here, drawing upon self-reported data and observations on the lived experiences of creative workers, is shedding some light on the mechanisms behind such

externalities. I would like to point out two implications in this regard. First, on the level of individual creative workers, co-location is, quite similar to earlier findings of e.g. Ebbers (2013), hardly ever leading to (formal) forms of collaboration. There is rarely any financial remuneration for the tasks, work or help exchanged. Inward- and outward contracting is uncommon, often non-existent. This confirms the idea that ‘measuring’ the impact of co-location (or even innovation) by looking at (formal) collaboration is at least difficult, if not impossible. Yet, this does not mean that we should disregard the importance of co-locating all-together for this particular field. Looking (qualitatively) at the *lived* experiences of creative workers allowed me to observe important effects of co-working, including collegiality, informal exchanges and social support. These effects, however, occur mostly on the informal level rather than the formal (cf. Alacovska, 2018), constituting a form of barter economy for advice, feedback, passing on projects or informal mentorship.

Second, and related to this barter economy and social support: there is a strong connection between agglomeration externalities and the literature on (creative) labour markets. However, this is rarely acknowledged in the existing literature in neither the geographic nor the creative labour field. Co-location may bridge the gap between (micro-)firms or freelancers and the transfer of informal knowledge that is not readily available by other means (e.g. formal education and other forms of schooling). Through (project based) working, interacting with other creatives and ‘learning by watching’, individuals learn the tricks of the trade (Eikhof & Warhurst, 2013). This shows that (what I call) collegiality is an underestimated phenomenon. Such collegiality is not about the exchange of codified knowledge, but rather the exchange of social support: the opportunity to share thoughts and ideas in a brief and informal manner, to have access to learning practical skills, to be able to express frustration, or to unite against other parties, such as the municipality or the management. Obviously, especially in today’s individualised labour market with solitary work practices, this is much more difficult to acquire (yet not less important!).

What is significant here, and what I also will address in the next paragraphs, is that these forms of contact that might tend to go unnoticed play an essential role in the development of creative, business, practical, and entrepreneurial skills that could eventually – but not necessarily – foster innovation. Such forms of exchange occur on a serendipitous, unplanned basis, finding their origin in informal interactions on the work floor transforming the mundane into more profane gatherings and events (cf. R. Collins, 2005; Durkheim, 1912). These interactions are usually not content-driven but sparked by the daily practices and rituals, leading to a collegial social conduct and – in some cases – a lively but informal barter economy guided by reciprocity and trust.

Instead of corroborating that these externalities exist, I have aimed to depict the steps taken and required for making such face-to-face interactions *work*. This includes the opportunity for collective effervescence to occur during, after or parallel to the mundane day-to-day work practices (Durkheim, 1912; R. Collins, 2014), for example by allowing rituals and forms of organisation to develop organically and by stimulating mutual exchange practices (cf. Mauss, 2011). This shows that, indeed, collective workplaces form a ‘middleground’ (Cohendet et al., 2010; Lange & Schüßler, 2018), not only aggregating the micro-level, but also adding another layer of organisation to it.

By working in the vicinity of others, individuals are exposed to different perspectives, work rhythms, but also connections to (potentially) other actors, including the larger ‘upperground’ organisations. As argued extensively in much of the more macro-oriented literature (Bathelt, 2005; Grabher, 2001; Maskell, 2001), creativity needs frequent face-to-face interactions in order to flourish and to be effective. Collaborative workplaces are obviously excellent facilitators of such face-to-face interactions and the empirical chapters have demonstrated that such spaces contribute to the development of common knowledge bases (Cohendet et al., 2010; see also Lange & Schüßler, 2018). Through these mechanisms and the development of not only spatial, but also social and cultural proximity, innovation is thought to materialise (e.g. Boschma, 2005; Maskell & Malm-

berg, 1999). Yet, unpacking this notion of innovation is subject to a separate, equally extensive discussion.

Situating innovation in the micro-level: partnerships, place, peers and passion

What my dissertation contributes to this field of research – and where it is at least somewhat innovative itself – is taking the perspective of creative workers *themselves* as a starting point, i.e. grounding this conceptualisation in empirical research. This builds upon the idea of the *lived* experienced outlined above, yet instead of taking what creative workers *do* as a starting point, I was interested in what they *think* about innovation and their own innovativeness.

In order to do this, I took a micro, practitioners’ view on innovation: what is it, and what strengthens or evokes the innovation of creative workers? The empirical findings are quite clear in this respect: the technologically oriented (ITPP-like) definitions of innovation – often used in economics and non-creative fields of practice and research – do little justice to the daily experiences of creative workers.⁴⁶ This led to the proposal that innovation in the creative industries is a field-specific and contextual process. In other words, what is new in one context, place or sector does not necessarily have to be innovative in others. More specifically, this indicates a form of innovation that has little overlap with the traditional notions of innovation in the sense that it rejects the idea of having a ‘universal’ newness, be it a new product, means of production, source or material, the opening of new markets or new industry structure (e.g. Schumpeter, 1934). It does emphasise that innovation is important in the creative industries and in the work of creatives (though some have little affinity with the term itself); yet that traditional means of analysis have little success in catching such

46 Obviously, this perspective is not new. Since the mid-2000s, many researchers have aimed to capture innovation in the creative industries in alternative definitions – either as opposites to existing, traditional conceptualisations or by developing a fully new approach (Béraud, Castel, & Cormerais, 2012; Castañer & Campos, 2002; Jaaniste, 2009; Miles & Green, 2008; Pratt & Jeffcutt, 2009; Stoneman, 2009).

innovative practices. This dissertation, therefore, still echoes the call of Pratt and Jeffcutt (2009) to take a holistic, process oriented approach when aiming to understand innovation in the creative industries.

The succeeding study – while acknowledging the rather ephemeral nature of innovation in the creative industries – aimed to further explore this topic by asking the question how such innovations come into being. Again, I relied on empirical methods, more specifically, a qualitative, self-reported approach aiming to capture the perspectives of the creative workers. Surprisingly, the question of what contributes to innovation in the creative industries has so far been rarely addressed in research on the creative industries. In fact, most of such studies consider the creative industries themselves a source of innovation in the wider economy, but ignore the question what actually makes the creative industries innovative (e.g. Bakhshi & McVittie, 2009; Müller et al., 2009; Bakhshi et al., 2008).

Here, based on in-depth interviews as well as a survey, I discern four separate sources of innovation for creative workers, ranging from very much internal to the creative worker to external forces. From external to internal: innovation can be driven by partnerships (with external partners/research institutes, etc), place (the ‘look and feel’ may provide inspiration to come up with new products), peers (collaboration and support of spatially proximate peers) and the creative workers’ personal passion (drive to innovate). With partnerships and passion being the topic of a wide range of studies looking at either institutions and innovation (e.g. Lundvall, 1992) or individual innovative or creative traits (e.g. Stock, von Hippel, & Gillert, 2016; Williamson, Lounsbury, & Han, 2013; Brandstätter, 2011), the four final empirical chapters have zoomed in on peers (Chapters 4 and 5) and place (Chapters 6 and 7). These chapters contend that innovation is driven not by the conscious and continuous exchange of creative ideas, but rather by offering a pool of capital or a ‘rich soup’ (Iammarino & McCann, 2006) that is not easily available to most individual creative workers (as freelance work is the most prevalent form of organisation). Such assets may nurture

a fertile ground that encourages creative workers to develop and implement their creative ideas that are new to their particular field or place.

Social and symbolic capital in collective workplaces

Evidently, co-working spaces or collective workplaces have something to offer. Creative workers pay an often substantial amount of money for their desks or studios, even though having such a physical workplace is, for many creative workers, not a necessity in the sense that they can do their work from a multitude of spaces, either first or third (Oldenburg, 1989). In other words, while being able to work from the ‘electronic cottage’ (Toffler, 1984), a growing number of self-employed workers decide to move to the ‘electronic village’. Is this, indeed, an illogical expenditure of *economic capital*, or is there a goal of acquiring other forms of capital (Bourdieu, 1990)? If so, what is it that they get from their investments (Bourdieu, 1986)? This question has been (often implicitly) haunting the field of research interested in co-working for more than a decade.

Indeed, existing research highlights the potential of community or collaboration (Garrett et al., 2017; Spinuzzi et al., 2019), but also points to knowledge exchange (Capdevila, 2015), an escape from the isolation and alienation of solitary (tele)work (Gurstein, 2001; Kjaerulff, 2010; Spinuzzi, 2012; Tremblay, Paquet, & Najem, 2006), socialising (Spinuzzi, 2012), the spaces’ (political) emancipatory function (Vidaillet & Bousalham, 2018) or access to external resources by deriving credibility from the co-working spaces’ ‘brand’ (Fabbri & Charue-Duboc, 2014). Yet, what these studies indicate is much more the *rationales* of deciding to work in a co-working space (i.e. locational-decision making processes) than the actual assets or externalities.

Moreover, most studies discussing co-working seem to agree on – as described above – the limitations of most of these assets, with workplace users tending to ‘work alone, together’ while being ‘good neighbours’ (Spinuzzi, 2012), or, in the words of Parrino (2015): experiencing co-working as “*little “co” and very “working”*” (p. 270). What this dissertation shows is what creative

workers may (think to) gain from co-locating. Not by measuring outcomes in terms of successful collaborations, fruitful interactions or any other countable or tangible successes, but rather by *observing* the practices and situated experiences of the creative workers. Based on the empirical chapters, I distinguish affordances in especially *social capital* and *symbolic capital* (cf. Bourdieu, 1986).

Chapter 4 and 5 demonstrate that, indeed, direct economic gains are rare, and the chances of (directly) engaging in truly collaborative efforts are limited. Yet, this does not mean that the importance of *social capital* of co-working spaces should be disregarded. Based on these chapters, I would like to contribute two important points to this discussion. First, while much research has focused on the term ‘community’ (e.g. Blagoev et al., 2019; Garrett et al., 2017; Spinuzzi et al., 2019), a poorly defined concept mostly encompassing the – rather vague – notions of knowledge sharing (Capdevila, 2015) and possible relational implications of co-locating (Parrino, 2015), I would argue that co-working rather constitutes a form of ‘surrogate collegiality’ (cf. Alacovska, 2018), referring mainly to an atmosphere affording informal help (much more than collaboration) and mentorships.

Often concealed as playfulness (Ross, 2003; Waters-Lynch et al., 2016), such collegiality allows but not necessarily imposes collaborative and communal behaviour. By co-locating, therefore, creative workers gain entry to a pool of *social capital*, which can be accessed by participating in this community and investing in social relations. Eventually, this can – but does not have to – pay off in terms of informally acquired gigs, feedback or future partnerships. Important here too is that co-location may function as a ‘middleground’ (see also e.g. Capdevila, 2013; Cohendet et al., 2010; Lange & Schübler, 2018; Merkel, 2015) between freelance creative labour and (creative) formal education.

Second, contrary to most studies emphasising the importance of hosting or managers (without wanting to deprecate their – mostly positive – influence), the fieldwork for Chapter 5 revealed that an important catalyst of the constitution of such

social capital can be found in bottom-up occurring interaction rituals. Successful interactions have been able to spark a chain reaction paving the way for future forms of (informal) help, knowledge exchange and potentially innovative efforts. Participating in these rituals too – together with this layer of collegiality – helps both novice and more experienced creative workers to learn the ‘tricks of the trade’ and to present themselves as successful creative workers (cf. Butcher, 2018 on rituals facilitating the “learning to co-work”).

Moreover, co-locating also affords a different, less often recognised kind of capital in the economic geography literature, more in line with what Bourdieu (1984) sees as *symbolic capital*. Chapter 6 demonstrates how spatial proximity to other, well-regarded creatives can provide a form of dividend; not only because of the potential affordances in terms of *social capital*, but also because it grants credibility and legitimation as a professional or creative individual. Interestingly, this mechanism does not only work in the worlds’ – abundantly studied – creative metropolises, but also in settings that have received far less acclaim. Perhaps especially in ‘ordinary cities’ (Amin & Graham, 1997) this is even more relevant, as *symbolic capital* – the creative workers’ prestige, credibility or credibility within a social field (Bourdieu, 1993) – is less readily available. In such locations, creative workers are not or less able to tap into the global city discourses that have been dominating the creative field for more than two decades (see e.g. Scott, 2000; Zukin, 1995; Sassen, 1994). By surrounding themselves with other creatives, however, they are able to show that they are part of a (potentially well-regarded) network of creatives, even though the saturation of creatives in their cities is generally relatively low. Instead of being able to derive *symbolic capital* by saying they work in a place *in* Berlin, they can say (and did this throughout the qualitative studies) that they work in a place *like* Berlin.

The final empirical chapter continues this spotlight on *symbolic capital*, but concentrates mainly on the built environment, in this case, converted industrial buildings. This chapter, even more so than the preceding, engages with the concept of *au-*

thenticity work: how the respondents aim to present themselves as genuine creative workers. I discerned a number of elements that especially granted *symbolic capital*, including field-specific aesthetics (concrete floors, industrial elements), spatial configurations (size and adaptability of the building), but also less tangible components such as the buildings' history. This capital can, according to this chapter, be converted to other forms of capital by attracting potential clients or partners through increased credibility, as well as contribute to the creative workers' inspiration. This adds to existing research on the spatial characteristics of shared workplaces. This research usually discussed either the *material* (functionality or physical affordances), quoting one of Spinuzzi's (2012) respondents: "*if you're going to be sitting somewhere for three or four hours, the chair better be comfortable*" (p. 422), or the *symbolic* (elements inspiring creative workers, yet with little attention to how these mechanisms actually work (e.g. Drake, 2003; Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010)) characteristics. Moreover, by exploring the nexus between global and local input, it provides further insights into how these local and global symbols are used and converted in order to acquire *symbolic capital*.

LIMITATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

A qualitative, micro-level approach to innovation

In this dissertation, I have aimed to disentangle how creatives see innovation, what might spark such innovation in their eyes, and how co-location of individual creative workers can contribute to innovation. As the notoriously diffuse ways in which innovation in the creative industries is described, applied and understood indicate: this is quite an arduous task. In Chapter 2, I defined innovation as "*a field-specific process that has value in specific contexts and locations and takes different shapes in different settings.*" My definition is particularly helpful in understanding the idiosyncrasies of innovation in the creative industries as it opens up the scope to include local (material, social and symbolic) features

and their effects on (perceived) innovativeness. However, it offers little guidance to those aiming to measure, count or calculate innovativeness in this field – though whether or not this is at all possible remains a separate question.

An area for future research is provided by the four sources of innovation: partnerships, place, peers, and passion. Chapter 3 has taken a first step to map these sources and to provide insight into their relative importance. Yet, this dissertation does not provide a ranking of the most – or least – important sources. Future research could use this typology to further understand what drives innovation in the creative industries. Moreover, these sources can also be connected to other fields of research – for example and as proposed in Chapter 3 – by relating partnerships to e.g. triple helix research (e.g. Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997), place inform research on agglomeration externalities (Gordon & McCann, 2005a; Porter, 2000; Van der Panne, 2004), peers to further understand ‘buzz’, knowledge exchange and (micro-) interactions between creative workers (Asheim et al., 2007; Bathelt, 2007; Storper & Venables, 2004) and passion to nuance research on individual creativity (Ardichvili et al., 2003).

The crux of these limitations lies in the micro- and meso-level approach pursued in this dissertation. I have taken the *lived, situated* experience of creative workers as an anchor point. While this provides an opportunity to observe macro-level assumptions in the daily work of creative individuals, it – building on the limitations mentioned above – does not offer a conclusive answer to the question *how much* innovation occurs in such collaborative workplaces. Therefore, quantitative research can take the next steps to operationalise this definition and these sources of innovation – which are grounded in the experiences of creative workers – to draw further conclusions about innovativeness in different settings or among different (sub)sectors.

Cases and comparisons

This research is built around ten collective, creative workplaces in the Netherlands. These cases have been limited to what Andres and Golubchikov (2016) call brownfields or are addressed

as creative hubs (Evans, 2009) or breeding places (Peck, 2012). Even though the sample in this study is diverse in size, institutionalisation, funding, historical background, organisational structure and level of urbanity, they are remarkably similar in other respects. All are loosely organised and production-oriented. Such places are often less institutionalised than for example museum quarters and other consumption-oriented places, and cannot be compared to these more centralised efforts (e.g. the Tilburg Veemarktkwartier described by Mommaas, 2004; or the Westergasfabriek by Hitters & Richards, 2002).

In all ten collective workplaces, creative workers can rent an office or a desk in a co-working setting. Colloquially, we refer to such workplaces as co-working spaces. Nevertheless, they differ from ‘traditional’ co-working spaces that are built towards collaboration and being in the immediate proximity of others. In most cases, the majority of offices are separated by walls or other physical structures, making them less *co-working* than most ‘traditional’ co-working spaces. Nevertheless, they have many characteristics that made them highly similar to the more ideal-typical co-working space. For example, many locations have open floors, ‘flex-desks’ or ‘flex-rooms’ geared towards more co-working oriented settings too. Moreover, they often share other facilities, such as meeting rooms, coffee corners, public spaces, lunch rooms, etc. In all locations, creative workers often had lunch or drinks together, giving users ample opportunities for encounters and interactions.

On their websites too, they present themselves as co-working spaces, or as places sparking interactions and innovation. For example, the Creative Factory states that they are “an innovative and industrial building for new ideas and networks in Rotterdam”⁴⁷, and De Gruyter Fabriek that they are “[...] buzzing. Work is being done. Like before: hard and long. But especially also like today: innovative and inspiring”⁴⁸. This also ties in with the buildings’ histories: all of them are adaptively reused buildings, mostly (8 out of 10) local industrial heritage, which obvi-

47 <http://www.creativefactory.nl>, page visited on April 18, 2019.

48 <https://www.degruyterfabriek.nl>, page visited on April 18, 2019.

ously affects the way in which creative workers experience their material surroundings (e.g. post-industrial aesthetics).

Therefore, though this dissertation sheds some light on the differences between the ten locations – without articulating this as a specific research aim – future research could do a more rigorous comparison of certain types of workplaces (Fuzy, 2015; Weijs-Perrée et al., 2019) in order to investigate their success in fostering innovation. Or, formulated differently: is the soup equally rich in all cases (cf. Iammarino & McCann, 2006)? And which ingredients would especially make the soup richer? Such attempts should make distinctions between more homogenous and heterogeneous groups of creative workers, more open versus closed settings, differences in the places’ aesthetic, symbolic and historical values, the presence or absence of incubation programmes, and the focus on the creative industries (as creative workers stand out in motivation and growth opportunities, see e.g. Loots & Witteloostuijn, 2018).

Moreover, all ten locations were included in this Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries (CICI) research project by means of self-selection: the managers themselves opted to partake in the project. This indicates a potential selection bias in the sense that on the one hand, only locations with active managers and already successful collaborative cultures might have felt stimulated to participate. On the other hand, locations dealing with financial instability might have hoped that by assessing the innovative cultures of the particular place might offer them stronger legitimacy as a successful creative workplace (*vis-à-vis* the municipality or other funding agents).

Another issue regarding case selection (and respondent sample – see also the next section) concerns the international generalisability of the findings. As discussed in the methods section in Chapter 1, the Netherlands houses a large number of collective workplaces and co-working spaces, and features particular national policies and practices. This includes organisational forms and funding of the workplaces, the interference of (semi)public institutions, the large number of freelancers, and strong representation of the creative industries in the Netherlands (e.g. Koops & Rutten, 2017).

Similarly, nearly all cases are in smaller, second- or even third-tier cities, with the most prominent Dutch creative powerhouse, Amsterdam (cf. Sassen, 1994), not present in the sample. Such second-tier cities have other pull-factors than famous metropolises such as New York or Paris (J. Brown, 2015), which might have a profound influence on the symbolic capital creative workers can derive from their workplaces. Cross-national comparative research could reveal whether the findings from this study are also applicable elsewhere in the world, and how the findings from Haarlem and Den Haag relate to practices in for example London, Los Angeles and Berlin. Such a comparison could provide better insights into the ways in which symbolic capital is acquired and exchanged, and how authenticity is constructed in an increasingly global world.

Respondents

Obviously, also the choice in respondents for both the qualitative and the quantitative studies bears some limitations. The first issue concerns the overlap between the creative industries and entrepreneurship. Nearly all respondents were either self-employed or were part of a small-sized enterprise. Even though the prevalence of freelancers and micro-firms is emblematic for the creative industries (Hesmondhalgh, 2012), this could indicate a conflation between entrepreneurship in general and creative work. Future research on entrepreneurship and attitudes towards innovation could clarify whether the findings are indeed emblematic for the creative industries, or if they are a result of generic attitudes of self-employed entrepreneurs and those working in SMEs.

Moreover, particular cultural connotations of a concept such as innovation (e.g. Mueller & Thomas, 2001) may have influenced the respondents' view presented in this dissertation. Discussing innovation in the Netherlands with creative workers might yield different results compared to similar discussions in other countries. With the number of freelancers in the Netherlands being high (and growing), and the Netherlands having developed an exceptionally strong knowledge economy (Koops &

Rutten, 2017), innovativeness might be something that is more natural for Dutch creatives. On the other hand, the strong public sector (and weaker market-orientation of the artistic sector) might dampen the need to be entrepreneurial and innovative for some creatives (see e.g. Bysted & Jespersen, 2014; Stam et al., 2008). Finally, the actual collaborative and innovative *practices* (i.e. social capital) also remain subject to further research. Are respondents in the Netherlands more or less eager to engage in co-working than their peers abroad? Although existing studies indicate little difference between countries (e.g. Merkel, 2015, which includes Berlin, New York and London), especially ethnographic cross-national comparative research could confirm whether the results of this study would indeed also be applicable elsewhere.

Finally, this dissertation took a cross-sectional approach in the sense that it observed creative workers at a certain point in time. Notwithstanding the focus on (locational) narrative construction (cf. Giddens, 1991), the opportunities for observing changes over time (e.g. in the development of social ties, the ‘commodification’ of the credibility derived from working in a well-regarded workplace) have been absent. Future research could take a longitudinal approach, following a number of creative workers after joining a co-working space in order to observe the potential for *capital conversion* (cf. Bourdieu, 1986), which obviously takes more time in some cases than in others. For example, being able to benefit from increased *social capital* could occur quickly after joining a co-working space by engaging in curated events, yet, becoming part of a co-working community might take much longer to pay off (if at all). Similarly, creative workers may immediately benefit from higher *symbolic capital* by surrounding themselves with attractive post-industrial aesthetic design in terms of inspiration, but boosted credibility fostering connections with clients will probably take more time.

In terms of generalisability, I also have to point out that I have focussed on creative workers *within* shared workplaces. Though many – especially self-employed – creatives do make use of such a facility, this is not the case for all. Some are em-

bedded in larger companies, others are even more nomadic in the sense that they have no fixed location from which they work, and finally, working from home is not uncommon either. Of course, there is a group of creative workers that ‘drop out’ of such workplaces as well for various reasons and proceed to work from other places. Obviously, this does not mean that these creative workers cannot be innovative. Therefore, it might be relevant to compare co-located creative workers with creative workers *outside* of such workplaces.

PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS

This dissertation is about the creative industries, but the findings transcend the creative industries. Creativity has generally become more important to competitiveness, and highly related to terms such as the knowledge economy and information society. Moreover, due to the uncertain labour market of especially the last two decades, policy makers turned to the creative sector as a ‘miner’s canary’ for the wider economy, assuming that the industries’ labour market structures will soon manifest in all sectors (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). The characteristics of creative work therefore presumably have wider implications for the modern workplace in general. ‘Spatially embedded’ concepts, including networked, project-based working, ‘buzz’ and ‘noise’, are – as described in the dissertation – important for the creative industries, but also increasingly considered the rationale for the nature of labour in the twenty-first century (cf. Ross, 2003; Jessop, 2016; Gertler, 1988).

This final section describes some implications of the findings for especially policy makers and workplace managers. It is organised around the macro- and meso-level, first discussing the position of co-working or collective workplaces as a tool for urban planners and policy makers, followed by some thoughts about the role of hosts in fostering interactions, potential knowledge exchange, and innovation.

Co-working spaces as a tool for urban planners

Co-working spaces have not appeared out of thin air. Their emergence is rooted in broader societal and urban developments. As described in Chapter 1, collective workplaces and co-working spaces find their nascence in two parallel developments. First, (creative) production has increasingly become synonym to the idea of freelance, flexible work. In the Netherlands and abroad, the number of self-employed creative workers has grown dramatically, and obviously, the nature of their work demands specific, new ways of organising their daily practices. Many creative workers seek the proximity of their peers because of the need for sociality, the appreciation of tacit knowledge exchange, the pressure to escape the isolation of self-employed work, and the aspiration to develop a credible professional or creative reputation.

Yet, based on the literature review in Chapter 1, I would argue that we should be cautious in seeing co-location as a cure to the perils of today's precarious work. They are much more of a symptom of, than an antidote to insecure labour conditions. Many creative workers would – and some also complained about this during the interviews – benefit much more from having a more secure income and a social safety net rather than a place in which they can (or must) exhibit their entrepreneurial pursuits (see e.g. Gill & Pratt, 2008; Hesmondhalgh & Baker, 2010; Ross, 2008, 2009). In this, I also echo the words of Schmidt (2019) in that policies tend – perhaps too quickly – to utilise such workplaces to govern creative labour processes without addressing the decline in social security schemes.

Moreover, users of such spaces are primarily – still – a white, higher educated population. There seems to be little space for (especially ethnic) diversity in such locations (cf. Schmidt, 2019). If we follow Jane Jacobs' account of diversity and innovation (often applied to the urban level) when assessing the innovative capabilities in co-working spaces (i.e. on the micro-level), a homogeneous, middle class population will probably not be a benefit (J. M. Jacobs, 1962; Galliano et al., 2015; Van der Panne, 2004; see also Department for Business, Innovation & Skills,

2013 for a discussion of the effects of workplace diversity). Policy makers and workplace managers could take this into account when developing workplace policies and aim to integrate a wider audience than the typical creative worker.

Increasingly too, co-working spaces are – recycling much of the earlier creative cluster gentrification discourses (Lloyd, 2002; Whiting & Hannam, 2017; Zukin, 1982) – seen as boons to the city's ills (Hesmondhalgh, 2012). Co-working spaces have become part of many cities' placemaking initiatives (Moriset, 2013) and are supported to foster entrepreneurial innovation (Schmidt, 2019). However, existing empirical studies (e.g. Nijkamp, 2016) showed that investing in creative workplaces with the aim of raising real estate value or inducing gentrification processes is quite problematic. In the case of this dissertation, I observed that the temporary nature of such efforts can be detrimental for the long-term success of developing a collegial atmosphere and eventually a successful community. Moreover, most of the cases in this dissertation are located in relatively disadvantaged neighbourhoods. Yet, despite many respondents and managers articulating a positive attitude towards their potential role in neighbourhood regeneration, the embeddedness within the neighbourhood was often weak.

I therefore agree with Rus and Orel (2015) that investing resources in transforming post-industrial workplaces in a top-down manner is a challenging, and potentially too costly approach. Instead, supporting existing creative communities, those that are already successful and experienced in this field, may be a better instrument to attain creative communities that might eventually contribute to innovation. Such a top-down and bottom-up synergy, as Rus and Orel (2015) claim, has indeed proven to be successful in releasing the, what they call, 'creative energy' in existing communities in some of the locations in this research. Examples of this are e.g. De Gruyter Fabriek and Strijp-S, which were both occupied by an enduring community of artists and creatives (often with anti-squat contracts⁴⁹) who

49 A form of real estate policy common in the Netherlands in which vacant buildings are occupied by a number of users (with very little to no rights or rent protection) in order to prevent squatters from using the property.

were supported by a top-down policy aspiring to transform the building into a legitimate creative hub. However, in situations in which either larger institutions (e.g. the municipality in the case of de Vasim, or a real estate developer in the case of de Honigfabriek) had little regard for the existing communities, or in which a top-down policy was developed without much support for the bottom-up initiatives, it has proven to be more difficult to develop or consolidate a sustainable community.

Co-working hosts and managers: orchestrating serendipity

Despite the importance of bottom-up, self-organising capacities of creative workplaces, many empirical studies have demonstrated the hosts' or managers' evident role in the social success of such spaces, as well as their contribution to (individual) innovativeness (e.g. J. Brown, 2017; Merkel, 2015). Such a new form of curating – caring for something – has of course always existed both in gatekeeping as well as in guiding behaviour face-to-face in physical spaces (e.g. clerks). Yet, recently, it became a more fashionable concept in the co-working discourse (Jansson & Hrac, 2018). This community management or curation in co-working spaces consists of, in the words of Merkel (2019), being an 'active catalyst', helping members exchange ideas and work and therefore making co-working spaces more than just a regular office space. Indeed, this dissertation, in line with existing research on co-working spaces, highlighted that just filling an empty room or building is not always enough to develop a vibrant community. Some curation by a facilitator or host is thought of as an effective step towards transforming working into *co-working* (or at least something closer to collaborative efforts) (J. Brown, 2017; Merkel, 2019; cf. Schmidt, 2019).

Especially for building a community – that is, successfully combatting isolation in work – this has proven to be important. Merkel (2019) uses the term 'mothering' here. In the interviews too, respondents talked about managers or hosts using these terms (e.g. 'grandfather'), or managers seeing themselves as 'campsite bosses', watching over the campers but not interven-

ing too much. Such a welcoming attitude has been considered especially important in fostering pro-social behaviour and mutual support systems that could, in the longer run, foster knowledge exchange and innovation.

Also in line with the findings of Merkel (2019), co-locating has some other advantages, including providing visibility. Other co-workers, hosts or managers can showcase co-working members to a potential public, including other co-workers, policy makers, firms or partners. This is especially important for self-employed creatives, who are dependent on such collaborations and contacts with other partners for their creative and professional success. Indeed, this advantage of co-working was, in many cases, mentioned in the interviews, with respondents engaging in narratives about how they got in touch with other actors, and what they got out of these contacts. Similarly, many respondents emphasised how working among well-regarded peers and in aesthetically appropriate buildings imbued with symbolic historical value enhanced their credibility and creative or professional reputation. In this, hosts or community managers could play an essential role in actively connecting actors in order to strengthen strong ties, to induce weaker ties (Granovetter, 1983), and to curate the 'look and feel' of the places (Heebels & Van Aalst, 2010).

However, there is one critical remark I would like to make here. Many respondents in the qualitative studies emphasised the importance of hosts in catalysing social interactions, and the absence of such hosts in some locations (either due to cutbacks or because they were never present) was lamented by the local workplace users. Nevertheless, the ethnographic chapter in this dissertation demonstrated that hosts were neither a necessary, nor a conditional prerequisite for having social interactions. Interactions can be instigated by curated activities such as organising breakfasts, lunches, or drinks, but they also may occur naturally and bottom-up through the emergence and performance of interaction rituals. Co-working hosts, therefore, should also leave room for such rituals to develop organically, for example, by not intervening too much in the daily practices (e.g. adapta-

tions of the workplace, the problem-solving capacities of the group) of creative workers.

Overall, my research has demonstrated that innovation in the creative industries is not a phenomenon that is captured easily. It has been guiding much of our thoughts on how we perceive these industries: as forerunners of the post-Fordist knowledge economy as well as something that is sparked by agglomeration – another aspect in which the creative industries stand out. Innovation in this context does not necessarily refer to a radical, field changing product or practice, but rather to a product or service that pertains newness in a given context. Do we find more of such innovations in situations where individual creative workers indeed consciously decide to flock together? That remains difficult to say, based on my mostly qualitative approach. Yet, what I can say is that place continues to matter. It matters, because bodily co-presence continues to yield fruitful interactions promoting the diffusion of ideas, and it matters, because it grants authenticity and credibility to those working on a sector that thrives on exactly that.

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Appendix A

In-depth interviews with co-located creative workers⁵⁰

Name	Location	Date	Gender	DCMS Sector
<i>Jimmy</i>	Dutch Game Garden	03/03/2014	M	Digital and entertainment media
<i>Monique</i>	BINK36	01/09/2014	F	Arts and antiques
<i>Jessica</i>	BINK36	01/09/2014	F	Arts and antiques
<i>Mark</i>	BINK36	09/09/2014	M	Software and electronic publishing
<i>Kim</i>	BINK36	09/09/2014	F	Film, video and photography
<i>Henry</i>	Belcanto	12/09/2014	M	Music and visual and performing arts
<i>Daniel</i>	Belcanto	12/09/2014	M	Crafts
<i>Tom</i>	Klein Haarlem	18/09/2014	M	Design
<i>Charlie</i>	Klein Haarlem	18/09/2014	F	Film, video and photography
<i>Abel, Marcus and Joey</i>	Klein Haarlem	18/09/2014	M, M, M	Advertising
<i>Peggy</i>	Bink36	19/09/2014	F	Designer fashion
<i>Alex</i>	BINK36	19/09/2014	M	Film, video and photography
<i>Leo</i>	BINK36	30/09/2014	M	Film, video and photography
<i>James</i>	BINK36	30/09/2014	M	Music and visual and performing arts

⁵⁰ Anonymised

<i>Sebastian</i>	BINK36	30/09/2014	M	Music and visual and performing arts
<i>Andreas and Adam</i>	Strijp-S	09/10/2014	M/M	Design
<i>Bjorn</i>	Strijp-S	22/10/2014	M	Advertising
<i>Thomas</i>	Strijp-S	22/10/2014	M	Digital and entertainment media
<i>Kathryn</i>	BINK36	28/10/2014	F	Designer fashion
<i>Timothy</i>	De Gruyter Fabriek	11/11/2014	M	Advertising
<i>Brenda</i>	De Gruyter Fabriek	20/11/2014	F	Arts and antiques
<i>Suzanne</i>	De Gruyter Fabriek	20/11/2014	F	Architecture
<i>Eric</i>	De Gruyter Fabriek	20/11/2014	M	Software and electronic publishing
<i>Ellen</i>	Vasim	24/11/2014	F	Arts and antiques
<i>Julia</i>	Vasim	24/11/2014	F	Music and visual and performing arts
<i>Jack</i>	Vasim	25/11/2014	M	Crafts
<i>Lucas</i>	Vasim	25/11/2014	M	Music and visual and performing arts
<i>Francois</i>	Vasim	25/11/2014	M	Arts and antiques
<i>Axel</i>	Vasim	01/12/2014	M	Music and visual and performing arts
<i>Mike</i>	Vasim	01/12/2014	M	Design

<i>Michelle</i>	De Gruyter Fabriek	02/12/2014	F	Digital and entertainment media
<i>Linda</i>	Strijp-S	03/12/2014	F	Advertising
<i>Claire</i>	Strijp-S	03/12/2014	F	Design
<i>William</i>	Strijp-S	03/12/2014	M	Design
<i>Anne</i>	Vasim	15/12/2014	F	Music and visual and performing arts
<i>Heidi</i>	De Gruyter Fabrie	22/12/2014	F	Arts and antiques
<i>Dennis</i>	Strijp-S	23/01/2015	M	Advertising
<i>Louis</i>	Creative Factory	03/05/2015	M	Design
<i>Sander</i>	Dutch Game Garden	10/06/2015	M	Digital and entertainment media
<i>Rachel</i>	Creative Factory	30/07/2015	F	Design
<i>Justin</i>	Dutch Game Garden	24/09/2015	M	Digital and entertainment media
<i>Michael</i>	Dutch Game Garden	24/09/2015	M	Digital and entertainment media
<i>Robert</i>	Creative Factory	05/10/2015	M	Crafts

Appendix B

In-depth interviews with managers⁵¹

Name	Location	Date
<i>Pascal</i>	De Vasim	16/12/2013
<i>Constantin</i>	De Gruyter Fabriek	10/01/2014
<i>Olaf and Tim</i>	Klein Haarlem	13/01/2014
<i>Theo</i>	BINK36	17/01/2014
<i>Anton</i>	Strijp-S (Apparatenfabriek and Klokgebouw)	23/01/2014
<i>Eduard</i>	Belcanto	03/02/2014
<i>Paul</i>	Hazemeijer Hengelo	10/02/2014
<i>Abigail</i>	Creative Factory	27/02/2014
<i>Simon</i>	Dutch Game Garden	03/03/2014
<i>Dominic</i>	Honigfabriek	27/10/2014

51 Anonymised

Appendix C

Topic list in-depth interviews⁵²

Introduction respondent:

- Can you tell me something about yourself as creative worker?
- How did you end up in this location?
- Why are you here, and not somewhere else (e.g. in a 'general' business centre, creative cluster or office)?

Building, neighbourhood and reputation:

- How does it feel to work here?
- How do people react when you mention that you're located in this building?
- What kind of reputation does this place have, you think?
- Has this place's reputation been important for you in your locational-decision making processes?
- How do you think the people working here profit from the reputation of this area/building?
- What kind of workers would you like to see here, in this location?
- How does this overlap with the current population?

Interactions:

- Do you often talk to other creative workers here? How often? About what?
- Can you tell me about an interaction you've had with another creative worker? Is this a usual kind of interaction? Or is this an exception?
- How does information spread in this building?
- Do you sometimes collaborate with other creative workers here? (if so: example, if not: would you want to do this? Why (not)?).
- In general, what do you think of the other creative entrepreneurs?

⁵² Translated from Dutch.

Building, visually:

- What do you think of the building in which you work?
- Could you describe the building in a few words?
- What kind of possibilities does the building offer?
- What do you know about the building's history?
- What value does this history have for you personally?

Facilities, management:

- Are there specific facilities here you really appreciate?
- Are there any facilities here that you're missing?
- Are there any selection criteria that decide who is welcome to locate here, and who is not? What do you think of this?
- Are there any organised activities? What do you think of this?
- Does the manager try to establish a kind of atmosphere in this building? What kind of atmosphere? What do you think of this?

Innovation

- In general, how would you define innovation?
- And within your own field of work, what is innovative?
- What is, in your opinion, the role of technology in innovation?
- Do you see yourself as innovative?
- What makes you innovative? What contributes to innovation for you?
- What kind of role does place play in this?
- Is there something I did not ask but what you consider relevant?

Appendix D

Information sheet in-depth interviews⁵³



CULTURES OF INNOVATION

IN THE CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Erasmus University Rotterdam is looking for respondents to interview for the Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries (CICI) project

Why? Our goal is to gain insight into the innovation processes in the creative industries. What is the relationship between creativity, innovation and co-location? How do creative entrepreneurs work and how do they become and remain innovative? Which characteristics of a location contribute to the successful development of a firm, and how can this be improved?

How? We will conduct interviews in 10 creative creative collective workplaces throughout the Netherlands on the experiences of working in such buildings. In addition, an online survey is sent to all companies based in these 10 locations with short questions about this subject.

When? We started with the first interviews in September 2013 to investigate the current state of affairs. Interviews will be conducted again between September 2014 and December 2015. In this period, the survey will be distributed as well. A final conference and report will follow mid-2016.

Who? Principal investigator Erik Hitters, senior researcher Pawan Bhansing and junior researcher Yosha Wijngaarden of the Erasmus University Rotterdam. Also visit our website www.ciciproject.nl, or contact our researchers: wijngaarden@eshcc.eur.nl.

⁵³ Translated from Dutch.

Appendix E

Information sheet survey⁵⁴

Dear tenant, sir/madam,

Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

This is the second part of the CICI survey. You can complete this survey regardless of whether or not you have completed the first part.

This survey is intended for (creative) entrepreneurs/artists who are located in a creative collective workplace or creative cluster, including freelancers, managers and/or founders of an organisation and people who carry out activities under their own name. The organisations of the foregoing persons are in this survey referred to as 'firm'.

This research is being carried out as an initiative of the CICI project of the Erasmus University Rotterdam and DCR Network and not on behalf of a third party. All participants are anonymised. The purpose of this research is to gain insight into your creative process and the influence of other (creative) entrepreneurs/artists on this process. You can find more information about the research on our website www.ciciproject.nl. On our website, the results of the first survey will be presented early 2016. A final conference will also take place in 2016 where, among other things, we will provide feedback to the managers of the locations.

Among the participants who have fully completed the questionnaire, we will draw five prizes. The winners have the choice of:

- A dinner voucher;
- Fujifilm Instax 210 camera with which you print your photo directly;
- Museum card + The Rijksmuseum Cookbook;
- The inspiring book package, composed by ourselves, consisting of 'Drive', 'Ons onfeilbare denken', 'Het beslissende moment' and 'Begin met het waarom'.

Completing the questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes. Please note: there are no right or wrong answers.

If you have any questions, please contact Pawan Bhansing (bhansing@eshcc.eur.nl).

⁵⁴ Translated from Dutch.

English summary

The creative and cultural industries are booming. Newspapers and policy reports on regional, national and international level all aim to tap into the wealth the cultural and creative sectors ought to bring. While the Western economies since the early 2000s have witnessed periods of decline, the cultural and creative economy showed continuing growth, are incorporating an increased segment of the overall economy, and are employing an ever growing number of individuals.

This peak in interest in the cultural and creative industries emerged parallel to the advent of explicit creative industries policies in the recent three decades. From the onset of this creative industries mania, these economic and policy considerations have been explicitly connected to spatial settings, most importantly within the urban context and ‘the art of city making’ (Landry, 2006). For urban policies, the catalyst of this creative city debate has been the famous *The Rise of the Creative Class* publication (Florida, 2002), which sealed the bonds between place, creative production and innovation. Clusters of creative industries became the vehicle of post-modern innovation, as well as the post-Fordist solution to deteriorating urban economies (Bille & Schulze, 2006; Lash & Urry, 1994; Zukin, 1995).

In line with the emergence of the creative industries and creative clusters, the conception of innovation has changed too. While traditionally innovation was understood to involve goal-driven, corporate-led and top-down endeavours, more recent interpretations of innovation point towards new bottom-up developed initiatives (Fiorentino, 2018). The traditional approaches, preoccupied with investing in research and development (R&D) and the development of new technologies, have generally been a poor fit to the creative industries, which rarely consider their innovative pursuits as efficient investments in technologies in order to generate novelty.

Nevertheless, these industries are highly dependent on the creation of original and novel works of art, products and services (C. Jones, Svejnova, Pedersen, & Townley, 2016) with their

innovation residing mostly in aesthetic properties (semiotic codes) and material bases (C. Jones, Lorenzen, & Sapsed, 2015; see also Stoneman, 2009). Equally important in this regard are the creative industries' persisting structural characteristics, such as the dominance of freelance, project-based work and informal networks. These characteristics have a tremendous influence on how and what kind of novelties are produced. It is especially in agglomerative settings, such as creative clusters or, having gained momentum over the last decade, the co-working space, where such innovative capabilities are thought to come to fruition.

Such collective workplaces facilitating co-location and collaboration are conceptualised as the nexus of this new interpretation of innovation. By conjoining the elements of *co*(l-laboration), *working* and *space*, they are thought to allow new forms of (spatial) organisation that may contribute to sparking unplanned, serendipitous encounters and bottom-up collaborative initiatives (Jakonen, Kivinen, Salovaara, & Hirkman, 2017; Moriset, 2013; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017; Olma, 2016; Fabbri, 2016). Their setting as an intermediate organisation (meso-level) between the urban structures (macro-level) and the individual creative worker (micro-level) makes them a sociologically interesting phenomenon – connecting the interactions between 1] the city, its histories and built environment, 2] local and national urban and cultural policies and 3] (freelance) labour market conditions (see also Cohendet, Grandadam, & Simon, 2010; Lange & Schübler, 2018).

However, this intermediary locus of such places also exposes their paradoxical nature. First, the ideology of creative industries innovation, embedded in the discourse of self-employed work and creative entrepreneurship – often loosely connected to the idea of mobile, self-organised, flexible and virtual work (Gandini, 2016; Jakonen et al., 2017; Ross, 2003) – seems to be at odds with the rediscovery of place as articulated in the clustering and co-working rhetoric. While the final decades of the twenty-first century have been characterised by a declining interest in place and the rise of a (digital) nomadic, no-collar (Ross,

2003) class of (tele)workers whose ties to traditional office environments have been irrefutably broken, the number of collaborative workplaces is rising dramatically (DESKMAG, 2019). Work can be and is increasingly done from home, non-places (Augé, 2008) and third places (Oldenburg, 1989). Yet, co-workers are willing to pay an (often substantial) fee renting a desk in a flexible workplace. How is it possible that place, at the same time, is both losing and gaining importance for creative work?

Second, the idea of ‘accelerated’ (or even staged (Goffman, 1959)) serendipity as a catalyst for innovation seems to stand in a remarkable contrast to the organised nature of such workplaces, usually quite curated, structured and imbued with rituals (Blagoev, Costas, & Kärreman, 2019; J. Brown, 2017; Butcher, 2018). If serendipity refers to something inherently unplanned, how can it be captured in specific socio-spatial settings? Of course, this idea is not novel, with e.g. Jane Jacobs’ (1970) seminal thesis on urban diversity yielding innovative activities inspiring urban policy makers for decades. Yet, where such spatial planning initiatives usually occur on the macro-level, co-working spaces aim to translate this to a micro-management of encounters (Jakonen et al., 2017; see also Goffman, 1961).

This leads to the overarching research question of (*how*) *does co-location contribute to the self-perceived innovative capabilities of freelancers and SMEs in the creative industries?* Or, formulated differently, is it possible to disentangle how the different forms of capital creative workers are able to draw from both specific spatial characteristics as well as the vicinity of peers, competitors, potential collaborators, clients and networks contribute to innovation? Drawing upon a set of academic fields and topics, which – notwithstanding their increasing interconnectedness – have hitherto been relatively isolated, including geography, creative labour, entrepreneurship, innovation studies, and (cultural) sociology, I seek to understand these processes of innovation within the specific boundaries of creative workplaces, and how they foster, shape, and are shaped by creative work and production. In particular, this dissertation focusses on the intricate ways in which creative workers engage in the field of cultural production, learn

the rules of the game, accumulate and use their capital, and the practical skills and knowledge they need for developing potential innovative output (Bourdieu, 1986, 1993; see also e.g. C. Jones et al., 2016). After presenting an introduction, some contextual and theoretical considerations and the data and methods employed in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 to 7 present empirical case studies that aim to, step by step, disentangle the relationship between place, the creative industries, and innovation. Overall, the empirical chapters can be divided in three overarching segments.

The first part, covering Chapter 2 and 3, seeks to contribute to the existing literature on innovation in general, and the creative industries in particular, by digging deeper into the concept of innovation, and particularly how this is perceived and pursued by creative workers. These two chapters are primarily driven by the problematic nature of innovation in the creative industries, which on the one hand explicitly draws upon the idea that these sectors are inherently innovative (e.g. Müller, Rammer, & Truby, 2009; Handke, 2006; Lash & Urry, 1994), while on the other hand acknowledges the incongruence of applying an etic concept to the creative field (see among many others Stoneman, 2009; Oakley, 2009; Pratt & Gornostaeva, 2009; Jaaniste, 2009).

Building upon qualitative interviews as well as a survey among Dutch creative entrepreneurs, these chapters provide a definition of innovation that does justice to the *situated*, contextualised approach of this dissertation (Chapter 2), and postulate four factors that could potentially catalyse innovation: *passion*, *partnerships*, *peers* and *place* (Chapter 3). While individual, entrepreneurial passion to innovate (Schumpeter, 1934; Amabile, 1988; Drucker, 1985; Brandstätter, 2011) and *partnerships* with clients and research institutions (Colapinto & Porlezza, 2012; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997) have been addressed quite extensively by e.g. research on management and entrepreneurship, *peers* and *place* are exemplary for the contextual factors distinctly tied to spatial settings and are explored further in the subsequent chapters.

The second part zooms in on *peers*, the influence of the proximity of other creative workers on knowledge exchange,

social practices and potentially innovation. Both Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 are concerned with the social capital (J. M. Jacobs, 1962; Bourdieu, 1986) afforded by collective workplaces, but aim to move beyond the proposition that the mere co-location will yield collaborative spirits, bursts of knowledge exchange and innovative outputs (as already questioned by Fuzi, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012). Informed by qualitative, in-depth interviews with co-located creative workers, workplace managers and ethnographic fieldwork in such workplaces, both chapters tie the existing, macro-oriented research on creative clusters, knowledge exchange and innovation (Cooke & Lazzaretti, 2008; O'Connor, 2004; Porter, 1998; Pratt, 1997; Shefer & Frenkel, 1998) to more micro-processes of co-working practices, interactions and rituals.

Chapter 4 questions the assumption that proximity equals collaboration and sparks innovation. Instead, it proposes that proximity does contribute to the development of a fertile learning environment, offering a form of 'surrogate collegiality', in which essential tacit skills required for innovation can be gained and transferred. Chapter 5 dives even deeper in the micro-perspective by exploring not what kind of interactions take place, but rather how such interactions occur in the first place. Inspired by the symbolic interactionist work of Goffman (1959, 1963, 1967) as well as the interaction ritual approach developed by Collins (1981, 2005), it disentangles how proximity could foster optimal conditions that afford the exchange of words to begin with, and the exchange of knowledge as a potential succeeding step in the chain of interactions. In combination, both chapters provide further insights into the promises and practices of co-located creative workers that could, but not necessarily will, foster innovation in the longer run.

Chapters 6 and 7, the third part, concern mainly how *plave* provides symbolic capital to creative workers. Though – again – not necessarily being a sufficient condition for innovation, such capital both provides the legitimation required for professional and entrepreneurial success, as well as individual motivation and inspiration (as e.g. put forward by Drake, 2003; Heebels &

Van Aalst, 2010). More than the preceding chapters, and building upon in-depth interviews with creative entrepreneurs and workplace managers, they focus on how creative workers engage with their physical and symbolic environments. Chapter 6 emphasises how the proximity of creatives does not necessarily generate collaborative practices (quite similar to the findings of Chapter 4 and 5), but may provide ‘artistic dividend’ (Markusen & Schrock, 2006). The presence of other creatives translates into a local, creative reputation that provides a narrative that allows tapping into the creative city discourse and creative and/or professional legitimisation and inspiration. Chapter 7 explores how the physical, historical and symbolic value of the (usually post-industrial) building of the creative, shared workplace provides an air of authenticity by commodifying local histories while at the same time adhering to a global narrative of post-industrial aesthetics. Such symbolic spatial assets grant legitimacy and inspiration not available otherwise.

So, does co-location contribute to innovation? And if so, how? Considering the difficulties (or the impossibility) of actually *capturing* innovation in the creative industries, this question can only be answered tentatively. Taking all disclaimers into account, my answer would be: yes, but indirectly. Co-location does not necessarily lead to collaboration, and this collaboration only rarely sparks innovation. But does that mean that we should disregard this thesis altogether? I would say no. Co-location has a lot to offer – especially for a group that is highly dependent on project-based work, informal interactions, advice, authenticity and reputation. By co-location, creative workers gain access to a ‘rich soup’ (Iammarino & McCann, 2006) of tacit knowledge.

Moreover, it also allows them to acquire a more credible professional or creative reputation, both by being able to tap into the almost universal – at least in the western world – appreciation of (post-)industrial aesthetics, as well as by the sheer proximity of other, well-regarded creatives. More specifically, this means that on this ‘middle-ground’ of creative collective workplaces, the symbolic global flows and local histories intersect and mutually feed into each other, sparking new hybrid

forms of aesthetic and spatial configurations. Creative workers interpret global styles and apply them in local settings. They surround themselves with aesthetics and other creatives in order to connect to the global city prestige. In itself, none of these factors directly contributes to innovation. Yet, in combination, they provide a fertile soil on which innovative ideas can grow through informal help and tacit knowledge exchange. These ideas eventually can be harvested and implemented by having sufficient creative or professional credibility to bring products or services to the market.

Nederlandse samenvatting

De creatieve en culturele industrie bloeit. Kranten en beleidsrapporten op regionaal, nationaal en internationaal niveau fêteren de rijkdom die de culturele en creatieve sector moet opleveren. Terwijl de westerse economieën sinds het begin van de jaren 2000 periodes van achteruitgang hebben gekend, vertoonden de meeste cijfers over de culturele en creatieve economie een aanhoudende groei. De creatieve industrie neemt een steeds groter deel van de totale economie in, waarbij groeiend aantal individuen hun boterham verdient met werk in deze sectoren.

Deze piek in belangstelling voor de culturele en creatieve industrie ontstond gelijktijdig met de komst van expliciet beleid voor de creatieve industrie in de afgelopen drie decennia. Vanaf het begin van deze ‘creatieve industrie manie’ zijn deze economische en beleidsoverwegingen expliciet verbonden met het ruimtelijke perspectief, vooral binnen de stedelijke context en het idee van ‘the art of city making’ (Landry, 2006). Voor stedelijk beleid was de katalysator van dit *creatieve stad*-debat de beroemde publicatie *The Rise of the Creative Class* (Florida, 2002), dat plaats, creatieve productie en innovatie onlosmakelijk heeft verbonden. Clusters van creatieve industrieën werden het vehikel van postmoderne innovatie, evenals de post-Fordistische oplossing voor verslechterende stedelijke economieën (Bille & Schulze, 2006; Lash & Urry, 1994; Zukin, 1995).

Parallel aan de opkomst van de creatieve industrie en creatieve clusters is ook het concept van innovatie veranderd. Hoewel traditioneel werd gedacht dat innovatie doelgerichte, door bedrijven geleide en top-downinspanningen omvat, wijzen recentere interpretaties van innovatie op nieuwe bottom-up ontwikkelde initiatieven (Fiorentino, 2018). De traditionele benaderingen, die zich vooral bezighouden met investeren in onderzoek en ontwikkeling (R&D) en de ontwikkeling van nieuwe technologieën, passen over het algemeen slecht bij de creatieve industrie, die haar innovatieve activiteiten zelden beschouwt als efficiënte investeringen in technologieën om vernieuwing te genereren.

Desalniettemin is de creatieve industrie sterk afhankelijk van de creatie van originele en nieuwe kunstwerken, producten en diensten (C. Jones, Svejnova, Pedersen en Townley, 2016), en vinden zij hun innovatie voornamelijk in esthetische eigenschappen (semiotische codes) en materiële bases (C. Jones, Lorenzen, & Sapsed, 2015; zie ook Stoneman, 2009). Even belangrijk in dit verband zijn de structurele kenmerken van de creatieve industrie, zoals de dominantie van *freelance*, projectmatig werken en informele netwerken. Deze kenmerken hebben een enorme invloed op hoe en wat voor soort vernieuwing er wordt geproduceerd. Het is vooral in agglomeraties, zoals creatieve clusters of, steeds populairder, de *co-working spaces*, waar wordt gedacht dat dergelijke innovatieve praktijken kunnen plaatsvinden.

Zulke collectieve werkplaatsen die co-locatie en samenwerking mogelijk maken worden gezien als het knooppunt van deze nieuwe interpretatie van innovatie. Door de elementen *co*(llaboratie), *werken* en *plaats* samen te voegen, wordt gedacht dat ze nieuwe vormen van (ruimtelijke) organisatie mogelijk maken die kunnen bijdragen aan het in gang zetten van ongeplande, toevallige ontmoetingen en bottom-up samenwerkingsinitiatieven (Jakonen, Kivinen, Salovaara en Hirkman), 2017; Moriset, 2013; Waters-Lynch & Potts, 2017; Olma, 2016; Fabbri, 2016). Hun instelling als een intermediaire organisatie (mesoniveau) tussen de stedelijke structuren (macroniveau) en de individuele creatieve werker (microniveau) maakt ze een sociologisch interessant fenomeen. Het verbindt de interacties tussen 1] de stad met haar historie en gebouwde omgeving, 2] lokaal en nationaal stedelijk en cultureel beleid, en 3] (freelance) arbeidsmarktomstandigheden (zie ook Cohendet, Grandadam, & Simon, 2010; Lange & Schübler, 2018).

Deze intermediaire locus van dergelijke plaatsen legt echter ook hun paradoxale aard bloot. Ten eerste, de ideologie van innovatie in de creatieve industrie, ingebed in het discours van freelance werken en creatief ondernemerschap - vaak verbonden met het idee van mobiel, zelf georganiseerd, flexibel (tele)werk (Gandini, 2016; Jakonen et al., 2017; Ross, 2003) - lijkt op gespannen voet te staan met de herontdekking van plaats zoals

gearticuleerd in de creatieve cluster retoriek. Waar de laatste decennia van de eenentwintigste eeuw werden gekenmerkt door een afnemende belangstelling voor ‘plaats’ en de opkomst van een (digitale) nomadische, *no-collar* (Ross, 2003) klasse van (tele) werknemers wier banden met traditionele kantooromgevingen zijn verbroken, neemt het aantal collectieve werkruimten, met name *co-working spaces*, dramatisch toe (DESKMAG, 2019). Werk kan en wordt steeds vaker gedaan vanuit huis, *non-places* (Augé, 2008) en ‘derde plaatsen’ (Oldenburg, 1989), maar creatieve werkers zijn nog steeds bereid een (vaak substantieel) bedrag te betalen om een bureau te huren op een flexibele werkplek. Hoe is het mogelijk dat ‘plaats’ tegelijkertijd belang verliest en wint voor creatief werk?

Ten tweede lijkt het idee van ‘versnelde’ (of zelfs geënsce-neerde (Goffman, 1959)) serendipiteit als katalysator voor innovatie in een opmerkelijk contrast te staan met de georganiseerde aard van dergelijke werkplaatsen, die meestal enigszins gecue-reerd, gestructureerd en doordrenkt met rituelen zijn (Blagoev, Costas, & Kärreman, 2019; J. Brown, 2017; Butcher, 2018). Als serendipiteit verwijst naar iets dat inherent niet gepland is, hoe kan het dan worden vastgelegd in specifieke sociaal-ruimtelijke omgevingen? Natuurlijk is dit idee niet nieuw, met bijvoorbeeld Jacobs’ (1970) baanbrekende werk over stedelijke diversiteit en innovatieve activiteiten dat al decennialang stedelijke beleids-makers inspireert. Maar waar dergelijke ruimtelijke plannings-initiatieven zich meestal op macroniveau voordoen, trachten zulke collaboratieve werkruimten dit te vertalen naar en organiseren in een micromanagement van ontmoetingen (Jakonen et al., 2017; zie ook Goffman, 1961).

Dit leidt tot de volgende overkoepelende onderzoeksvraag: *(hoe) draagt co-locatie bij aan de zelf-ervaren innovativiteit van freelancers en MKB-bedrijven in de creatieve industrie?* Of, anders geformuleerd, is het mogelijk om te ontrafelen hoe de verschillende vormen van kapitaal dat creatieve werkers kunnen putten uit zowel specifieke ruimtelijke kenmerken als de nabijheid van collega’s, concurrenten, potentiële medewerkers, klanten en netwerken bijdragen aan innovatie? Voortbouwend op een reeks acade-

mische velden en onderwerpen, die - ondanks hun toenemende onderlinge verbondenheid - tot nu toe relatief geïsoleerd zijn geweest, waaronder geografie, studies omtrent creatief werk, ondernemerschap, innovatiestudies en (culturele) sociologie, probeer ik deze innovatieprocessen te begrijpen binnen de specifieke grenzen van creatieve werkplekken, en hoe deze worden bevorderd en gevormd door creatief werk. Dit proefschrift richt zich in het bijzonder op de complexe wijzen waarop creatieve werknemers zich bezighouden met culturele productie, het 'spel leren spelen', hun kapitaal verzamelen en gebruiken, en de praktische vaardigheden en kennis die ze nodig hebben om potentieel innovatieve output te ontwikkelen (Bourdieu, 1986, 1993; zie ook bijvoorbeeld C. Jones et al., 2016). Na het eerste hoofdstuk, dat de inleiding, enkele contextuele en theoretische overwegingen en de gebruikte data en methoden presenteert, bestaan hoofdstuk 2 tot en met 7 uit empirische casestudies die erop gericht zijn de relatie tussen plaats, de creatieve industrie en innovatie stap voor stap te ontwarren. Over het algemeen kunnen de empirische hoofdstukken worden verdeeld in drie overkoepelende segmenten.

Het eerste deel, dat hoofdstuk 2 en 3 behelst, tracht bij te dragen aan de bestaande literatuur over innovatie in het algemeen, en de creatieve industrie in het bijzonder. Het gaat dieper in op het concept van innovatie, en met name hoe dit wordt ervaren en nagestreefd door creatieve werknemers. Deze twee hoofdstukken worden voornamelijk gedreven door de problematische aard van innovatie in de creatieve industrie, dat enerzijds expliciet is gebaseerd op het idee dat deze sectoren inherent innovatief zijn (bijv. Müller, Rammer, & Truby, 2009; Handke, 2006; Lash & Urry, 1994), terwijl er anderzijds de incongruentie bestaat van het toepassen van een *etic* concept op het creatieve veld (zie onder andere Stoneman, 2009; Oakley, 2009; Pratt & Gornostaeva, 2009; Jaaniste, 2009).

Voortbouwend op kwalitatieve interviews en een enquête onder Nederlandse creatieve ondernemers biedt dit deel een definitie van innovatie die recht doet aan de gesitueerde, gecontextualiseerde benadering van dit proefschrift (hoofdstuk 2), en

postuleert het vier factoren die mogelijk innovatie zouden kunnen katalyseren: *passie*, *partnerschappen*, *collega's* en *plaats* (hoofdstuk 3). Terwijl de individuele, ondernemende *passie* om te innoveren (Schumpeter, 1934; Amabile, 1988; Drucker, 1985; Brandstätter, 2011) en *partnerschappen* met klanten en onderzoeksinstellingen (Colapinto & Porlezza, 2012; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 1997) relatief uitgebreid zijn bestudeerd door bijvoorbeeld onderzoek naar management en ondernemerschap, zijn *collega's* en *plaats* exemplarisch voor contextuele factoren van innovatie die beïnvloed worden door de ruimtelijke omgeving. Deze twee bronnen worden verder onderzocht in de opvolgende hoofdstukken.

Het tweede deel van deze dissertatie zoomt in op *collega's*: het effect van de nabijheid van andere creatieve werknemers op kennisuitwisseling, sociale praktijken en de potentiële invloed daarvan op innovatie. Zowel hoofdstuk 4 als hoofdstuk 5 houden zich bezig met het sociale kapitaal (J.M. Jacobs, 1962; Bourdieu, 1986) geboden door collectieve werkplekken, maar bekritisieren de thesis dat louter co-locatie leidt tot een cultuur van samenwerking, kennisuitwisseling en innovatieve output (zoals reeds bekritiseerd door e.g. Fuzi, 2015; Merkel, 2015; Spinuzzi, 2012). Bouwend op kwalitatieve diepte-interviews met creatief ondernemers, managers en etnografisch veldwerk op dergelijke werkplekken, verbinden beide hoofdstukken het bestaande, macro-georiënteerde onderzoek naar creatieve clusters, kennisuitwisseling en innovatie (Cooke & Lazzaretti, 2008; O'Connor, 2004; Porter, 1998; Pratt, 1997; Shefer & Frenkel, 1998) met de microprocessen van samenwerkingsmethoden, interacties en rituelen.

Hoofdstuk 4 contesteert de veronderstelling dat nabijheid gelijk staat aan samenwerking en inherent tot innovatie leidt. In plaats daarvan stelt het dat nabijheid bijdraagt aan de ontwikkeling van een vruchtbare leeromgeving, een vorm van 'surrogaat collegialiteit', waarin essentiële onbewuste (tacit) vaardigheden die benodigd zijn voor innovatie kunnen worden opgedaan en overgedragen. Hoofdstuk 5 duikt nog dieper in het micro-perspectief, niet door te onderzoeken wat voor soort interacties plaatsvinden, maar eerder hoe dergelijke interacties in de eerste

plaats ontstaan. Geïnspireerd door het symbolische interactionistische werk van Goffman (1959, 1963, 1967) en de door Collins (1981, 2005) ontwikkelde benadering van interactie rituelen, ontrafelt het hoe nabijheid optimale omstandigheden kan bevorderen die de uitwisseling van woorden mogelijk maken, met vervolgens de uitwisseling van kennis als een potentiële volgende stap in de keten van interacties. In combinatie bieden beide hoofdstukken verdere inzichten in de beloften en praktijken van agglomeratie die innovatie op de langere termijn zouden kunnen bevorderen, doch niet noodzakelijkerwijs dat zullen doen.

De hoofdstukken 6 en 7, het derde deel, hebben vooral betrekking op hoe een plaats symbolisch kapitaal biedt aan creatieve werkers. Hoewel dit - nogmaals - niet noodzakelijkerwijs een voldoende voorwaarde voor innovatie is, biedt dit kapitaal zowel een legitimatie als een succesvol creatief ondernemer, als wel individuele motivatie en inspiratie. Meer dan de voorgaande hoofdstukken, en voortbouwend op diepte-interviews met creatieve ondernemers en werkplekmanagers, richten deze hoofdstukken zich op hoe creatieve werknemers omgaan met hun fysieke en symbolische omgevingen. Hoofdstuk 6 benadrukt hoe de nabijheid van creatieven niet noodzakelijkerwijs samenwerking genereert (vrij gelijk aan de bevindingen in hoofdstuk 4 en 5), maar wel kan zorgen voor 'artistiek dividend' (Markusen & Schrock, 2006). De aanwezigheid van andere creatieven vertaalt zich in een lokale creatieve reputatie die zich verbindt met het idee van de creatieve stad en creatieve en/of professionele legitimatie en inspiratie biedt. Hoofdstuk 7 onderzoekt hoe de fysieke, historische en symbolische waarde van het (vaak post-industriële) gebouw van de creatieve, collectieve werkplek een sfeer van authenticiteit geeft door lokale geschiedenissen te commodificeren, maar tegelijkertijd ook de globale, post-industriële esthetische trends volgt. Dergelijke symbolische (globale en lokale) verbindingen verlenen legitimiteit en inspiratie aan de gebruikers van het pand.

Om terug te komen op de hoofdvraag: draagt colocatie bij aan innovatie? En zo ja, hoe? Gezien de moeilijkheden (of de

onmogelijkheid) van het daadwerkelijk observeren en begrijpen van innovatie in de creatieve industrie, kan deze vraag slechts tentatief worden beantwoord. Rekening houdend met deze disclaimers zou mijn antwoord zijn: ja, maar indirect. Co-locatie leidt niet noodzakelijk tot samenwerking, en deze samenwerking leidt zelden tot innovatie. Maar betekent dat dat we deze relatie helemaal moeten negeren? Op basis van de resultaten zou ik zeggen: nee. Co-locatie heeft veel te bieden, vooral voor een groep die sterk afhankelijk is van projectmatig werken, informele interacties en advies, authenticiteit en reputatie. Door co-locatie krijgen creatieve werkers toegang tot een 'rijke soep' (Iammarino & McCann, 2006) van onbewuste kennis (tacit knowledge).

Bovendien stelt het hen ook in staat een meer geloofwaardige professionele of creatieve reputatie te verwerven, zowel door gebruik te maken van de bijna universele - althans in de westerse wereld - waardering van (post-)industriële esthetiek, als ook door de pure nabijheid van andere, gewaardeerde creatieven. Meer specifiek betekent dit dat op deze 'middleground' van creatieve collectieve werkplekken, de symbolische mondiale stromen en lokale geschiedenissen elkaar kruisen en elkaar voeden, waardoor nieuwe hybride vormen van esthetische en ruimtelijke configuratie kunnen ontstaan. Creatieve werknemers interpreteren globale stijlen en passen deze toe in lokale situaties. Ze omringen zich met een bepaalde esthetiek en andere creatieven om zich te verbinden met de globale creatieve steden. Op zichzelf draagt geen van deze factoren rechtstreeks bij aan innovatie. Maar in combinatie bieden ze een vruchtbare bodem waarop innovatieve ideeën kunnen groeien door informele hulp en onbewuste (tacit) kennisuitwisseling. Deze ideeën kunnen uiteindelijk worden geogost en geïmplementeerd door creatieven die voldoende creatieve of professionele geloofwaardigheid te hebben om producten of diensten op de markt te brengen.

Portfolio

List of publications related to this project

- Wijngaarden, Y., Hitters, E., & V. Bhansing, P. (2019). 'Innovation is a dirty word': Contesting innovation in the creative industries. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 25(3), 392-405.
- Wijngaarden, Y., Hitters, E., & Bhansing, P. V. (2019). Close to the 'local cool': Creative place reputation in Dutch 'ordinary cities'. *Creative Industries Journal*, 12(1), 86-104.
- Bhansing, P. V., Wijngaarden, Y., & Hitters, E. (2019, accepted for publication). Identity work in the context of co-located creative entrepreneurs: How place influences professional identity. *International Journal of Arts Management*.
- Hitters, E., Bhansing, P.V. & Wijngaarden, Y. (2019, accepted for publication). Entrepreneurship identities in creative clusters. In M. Komorowski & I. Picone, *Creating Creative Clusters: Innovation, Governance and Production*. Cities and Regions Series, Routledge, UK.
- Bhansing, P. V., Hitters, E., & Wijngaarden, Y. (2018). Passion inspires: Motivations of creative entrepreneurs in creative business centres in the Netherlands. *The Journal of Entrepreneurship*, 27(1), 1-24.

Courses and workshops followed during PhD-project

Academic

- 2018: Analytic storytelling (2.5 EC)
 2018: RMeS winter school and graduate symposium
 University of Amsterdam (2 EC)
 2016: Brush up your SPSS skills (1 EC)
 2016: RMeS winter school and graduate symposium,
 University of Groningen (2 EC)
 2016: Qualitative comparative analysis (QCA) (2.5 EC)
 2015: RMeS summer school, University of Leiden (2 EC)
 2014: Beginners course Atlas.ti (2 EC)
 2014: Big data analysis and visualisation (2.5 EC)
 2014: How to get your article published (2.5 EC)
 2014: Nut en nadeel van de sociologie
 2014: Philosophy of the social sciences and the
 humanities (2.5 EC)
 2014: To participate or not to participate (ethnographic
 research) (1 EC)
 2014: Qualitative data analysis (1 EC)
 2014: Qualitative interviewing 1 (1 EC)

Didactic

- 2018: How to make your lectures more interactive
 2014: Basic didactics course

Courses taught during PhD-project

- *Creative labour*. Coordinator, MA
- *Research workshop innovation in the creative industries*. Co-coordinator, MA
- *Methods of media research I – In-depth interviews*. Module-coordinator, MA
- *MA thesis* supervision and second reader
- *Internship supervision*. BA-2/BA-3
- *Made in Holland: Dutch creative industries*. Co-coordinator. BA-2
- *Communication and media labour market orientation*. BA-2
- *International and global communication*. BA-2
- *Key concepts in the social sciences*. BA-1
- *Research workshop cross-national comparative research*. BA-1
- *Media systems in comparative perspective*. BA-1

Invited and guest lectures

- 2019: *Perspectives on creative labour*. Erasmus University Rotterdam, Cultural entrepreneurship: Theory [MA Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship]
- 2018: *Coworking in the CCI: From the macro to the micro (and back)*. Erasmus University Rotterdam, Cultural entrepreneurship: Theory [MA Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship]
- 2016: *Cultures of innovation in the creative industries*. Research group 'Creative Practices', Radboud University Nijmegen
- 2016: *Understanding innovation in the creative industries: A practitioners' view*. Erasmus University Rotterdam, Cultural Entrepreneurship: Empirical research [MA Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship]
- 2015: *Innovation in creative clusters*. HKU University of the Arts Utrecht [International MA-programme]
- 2014: *Clustering in the creative industries*. Radboud University Nijmegen [Dutch and Russian MA-level students]

Conferences and academic workshops during PhD project

- 2019: *Situating post-industrial creative workplaces: Global trends and local histories in creative reuse*. 10th International Conference on Arts and Cultural Management (AIMAC), Venice, June 24.
- 2019: *Performed boundaries in coworking spaces: Interaction rituals as facilitators of knowledge exchange and innovation in creative work*. Research Group Collaborative Spaces (RGCS) international symposium, Barcelona, January 14.
- 2018: *A professional playground: Interaction, collegiality and knowledge in Dutch small-scale creative clusters*. European Sociological Association (ESA) Midterm Conference, Sociology of the Arts & Sociology of Culture, Malta, September 7.

- 2016: *Sources of innovation in creative business centres*. European Sociological Association (ESA) Midterm Conference, Sociology of the Arts, Porto, September 8.
- 2016: *Innovation in the creative industries: A practitioners' view*. 19th International Conference of the Association of Cultural Economics International (ACEI), Valladolid, June 21.
- 2015: *Performing creative places: Clusters and reputation, identity and distinction*. 12th conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA), Prague, August 25-28.
- 2015: *Creative innovation: Conceptualising innovation for the creative industries*. 8th International Conference on Arts and Cultural Management (AIMAC), Aix-en-Provence/Marseille, June 26-July 1.
- 2015: *Beyond networks: The social image and reputation of creative clusters*. Creative Networks and Cultural Output conference, Dublin, June 19-20.
- 2015: *Locational narratives in creative clusters: An exploration of place, reputation and the creative industries in the Netherlands*. Association of American Geographers (AAG) Annual Meeting, Chicago, April 21-25.
- 2014: *Cultures of innovation in creative clusters*. 3rd International Research Conference on the Cultural and Creative Industries, Antwerp, May 22-23.

Conference/seminar (co-)organisation:

- 2018: *Here to stay! Continuity strategies for creative hubs*. Expert meeting Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries. Rotterdam, November 23.
- 2017: *RMeS Winter school and graduate symposium*, Rotterdam, February 23-24.
- 2016: *The place to be: The value of creative co-location*. Final conference for the Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries research project. Rotterdam, May, 26.

- 2015: *De ondraaglijke lichtheid van creatief ondernemen*. Think Tank Vizier conference on cooperation in the creative industries, Amsterdam, November 26.
- 2014: *Science meets creativity: Innovating in creative incubators*. Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries kick-off conference. Eindhoven, April 10.

About the author:

Yosha Wijngaarden (1987) is a postdoctoral researcher in the department of Arts and Culture Studies at Erasmus University Rotterdam. Yosha holds a bachelor's (2009, cum laude) and research master's degree in history (2012, VU University Amsterdam), and a master's degree in sociology (2012, University of Amsterdam). From 2012 to 2014, Yosha was a junior policy officer at the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), after which she embarked on a research project on Cultures of Innovation in the Creative Industries (with Erik Hitters and Pawan Bhansing). During her time as a PhD candidate and lecturer at the Media and Communication department, Erasmus University Rotterdam, she taught courses on e.g. creative labour, the creative industries, sociology and qualitative methods. Since September 2019, she is involved in a project on the income position and earning capacity of the Dutch creative sector, together with Ellen Loots and Arjen van Witteloostuijn. Yosha is part of the Dutch-Flemish research collective *Vizier* and the international *Research Group Collaborative Spaces*.



The creative industries are booming. Creative workers flock together in cities, clusters and co-working spaces, which all are assigned incredible innovative capabilities. This dissertation engages with three paradoxes arising from the increasingly common forms of co-located creative work: 'nomadic' workers seeking to locate in specific places, the overrepresentation of solopreneurs in collective settings, and the ambition to plan serendipitous innovation. Unpacking the different forms of capital creative workers are able to draw from specific spatial characteristics, this dissertation illustrates how the vicinity of peers, competitors, potential collaborators and networks contributes to self-perceived innovativeness.