



*Centre for German and European Studies
(St. Petersburg State University – Bielefeld University)*

Research & Study Group 'Creative city: reformatting the public space' (National Research University – Higher School of Economics at St. Petersburg)

International Workshop

Organizing Creativity in the City: Actors and Practices in Russia and Europe

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19.00

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The issues around creativity in the urban context have gained great interest among researchers and policy-makers. However, the usual discourses on creativity in the city are tools for positioning and marketing used by government institutions; what has not received due attention is the consideration of urban creativity from the inside – concrete practices of creative actors, networking, place embeddedness, etc. This workshop aims to fill this gap and takes a bottom-up perspective on the organization of the creative process taking place within artistic communities, creative spaces and creative enterprises.

During the workshop, researchers from St. Petersburg and Barcelona will give their presentations and draw comparisons across the contexts.

Presentations

Matias Zarlenga, University of Barcelona

Place and Creativity in Visual Arts. A Sociological Analysis of Urban Creativity Processes in the City of Barcelona

In recent decades, public administration, policy making and a part of academic sector have understood culture as a type of good or service that can generate economic benefits for cities. From this perspective, many cities' administrations have promoted public policies which aim to regenerate the old industrial cities. These strategies fall within two clear directional groups: (1) those aimed at developing economic sectors linked to the production of cultural goods by encouraging activities related to the so-called cultural or creative industries (Scott, 2000); and (2) those aimed at generating cultural services to attract tourism and business by recovering the heritage that already exists in towns and cities (urban regeneration), creating cultural institutions and facilities (such as museums and cultural centres), organizing events, etc. (Evans, 2001; García, 2004; Landry and Bianchini, 1995). Urban transformations of this type were understood as factors that helped to improve urban creativity processes and cultural innovation. In this context, the concept of *place* emerges as a central variable to understanding urban creativity processes in arts and creative industries.

This seminar aims to provide a sociological explanation of the incidence of the place (in its material, social and symbolic dimensions) in social processes of urban cultural creativity that differ from the standard explanations. For this purpose we will explain the incidence of the place in artistic creativity processes in different artistic communities in the city of Barcelona.

Nikita Basov, St. Petersburg State University

Alexandra Nenko, National Research University – Higher School of Economics at St. Petersburg

Knowledge Shaping Creativity: Semantic Networks of Artistic Communities in St. Petersburg and Barcelona

Communities of artists are characterized by intense expressive interaction between their members. They practice constant narrativization, which involves (re-)interpretation of the essence of art, conceptualization of artistic themes and formats, reflection on artworks as contextualized in the city space and discursive reproduction of their group structure. Thus, functioning of artistic communities and their creative practice appear to be tightly linked to knowledge creation processes running in these communities and influenced by their knowledge structures (Basov, Nenko 2013). To relate knowledge structures to the collective creative process of the communities we suggest studying their semantic networks.

The analyzed data is on four diverse artistic communities located in St. Petersburg, Russia and one located in Barcelona, Spain. Semantic networks of the communities are mapped using transcripts

of dialogues between the artists and of semi-structured interviews with the artists, as well as their textual works (articles in papers and magazines, poetry, novels, etc.), and posts in social media.

We use network- and ego-level metrics of semantic structures to characterize the knowledge fields of artistic communities, as well as to describe particular elements of their knowledge structures. Specifically, we identify the group structures of the communities expressed in discourse, e.g., estimate semantic positions of key actors' names. Network positions and semantic surroundings of key concepts referring to art in general, work and presentation spaces, particular artistic practices, etc. are analyzed. We estimate the properties of knowledge structures emerging in the creative process, using such parameters as clustering coefficient, size and amount of cliques, fragmentation, etc. Self-identification of the community is investigated by analyzing positions and particular semantic surroundings of concepts which serve as points of reference, for example, concepts representing various types of external art world authorities, as well as communities' names' positions and their semantic surroundings. Consequent comparative qualitative analysis allows us to relate differences in the collective creative processes of communities to the peculiarities of their knowledge structures in different sociocultural settings.

Margarita Kuleva, National Research University – Higher School of Economics at St. Petersburg

Alina Kolycheva, National Research University – Higher School of Economics at St. Petersburg

How to Organize the Unorganizable, or Cultural Production as Labor: Meaning of Working Time, Space and Division of Labor

According to the Romantic era conception of creativity, the process of creation of any cultural product, such as a poem or a painting, depends only on the personality of the artist and his/her inspiration. The approaches of sociology of art or the creative industries demonstrate that creative producers work more with «projects» than with «masterpieces», making budgets and timetables, planning and monitoring, having office hours, managing working tasks and so on.

The objective of the presentation is to highlight labor organization specifics in cultural production collectives/companies, in comparison with other industries. In particular, the presentation will focus on issues of (power) relationships and hierarchies in collectives, the meaning of working time and space, the role of social networks in the organization of working processes. The presentation will be based on preliminary results of projects «Creative city: reformatting public space» (2013) and «Creative entrepreneurship» (2012). The analysis will include more than 30 creative organizations: from street-artists or other guerilla projects to top down projects.