

ESSAYS ON ARTS ENTREPRENEURSHIP:
EXPLORING CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURIAL PROCESSES

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ABSTRACT

Despite both the fundamental role of entrepreneurship in the success of artistic careers and the similarities between creating art and novelty, the field of organizational entrepreneurship has, to date, paid little attention to the entrepreneurial processes involved in the creation of artistic work and aesthetic value. In an attempt to shift attention to overlooked areas and phenomena in our field (e.g., arts entrepreneurship, the aesthetics of entrepreneurship, novelty co-creation, creative imagining), this three-paper dissertation comprises (1) a problematization of the dominant assumption in organizational entrepreneurship studies that individuals behave rationally, (2) an 11-month-long multi-sited micro-ethnography of three ventures within the creative industry, comprising a total of four entrepreneurs and numerous customers in the visual and musical arts, to explore the processes—relational and embodied—involved in the creation of novelty by both entrepreneurs and (existing and imagined) customers, and (3) a 25-month-long case study of a nonprofit venture operating within the music industry, to propose a hopscotch process model of creative entrepreneurial imagination. This dissertation contributes to the field of organizational entrepreneurship by shedding light on the entrepreneurial processes of novelty co-creation and of creative imagining while calling scholars' attention to a largely overlooked perspective in entrepreneurship—one that challenges commonly taken-for-granted assumptions of both utility and economic profit maximization as drivers of the entrepreneurial process, in favor of a view in which individuals become entrepreneurial in the pursuit of entrepreneurial dreams, creative freedom, artistic passion, and social change.