

27th March 2014  
3.00 pm – 5.00 pm  
IRS, Erkner



Invitation  
to the 3<sup>rd</sup> IRS INTERNATIONAL LECTURE  
on Society and Space

## Producing through curation: the economic geographies of curation and curators

**Dominic Power**

**Abstract:** The aim of this lecture is to explore the idea that economic development in some regions is related not just to the location and agglomeration of producers and consumers but also of intermediaries. In specific the lecture introduces the idea of a specific type of intermediaries: those involved in processes of curation. Drawing on institutional art theory and research on the cultural economy, it is suggested that curators evaluate and ascribe value(s) to products in a proactive, critical and strategic way and as such are central to many contemporary value creation processes. Since value and status for so many products are often 'produced' through intricate networks of middlemen and 'cultural intermediaries' (Bourdieu 1984) it is important to understand those employed in such processes and the spatial aspects of their action.


Curators are specialized selectors who choose, sort and arrange multiple works in spaces and in front of audiences. They control exhibition and event spaces that are central to the creation of visibility, value and careers. They make links between existing fields and define new fields through assembling and collecting they create trends, schools, brands and associations. By exercising spatially rooted control over major institutions and exhibition spaces curators are also important to local fields and wider networks that temporarily coalesce around such spaces of exhibition. Finally, although curators are relatively hidden from public view they are well known to insiders and strongly influence the fields they are active in by creating an overall context for individual units and therein value, positions and careers. Curators play a central role in the subjective evaluation systems underpinning many cognitive and cultural markets and by organizing the exhibitions and institutions of display and appreciation they form a vital and highly spatialized series of links between producers, providers, audiences and consumers. The lecture attempts to theorize their role in the economy, the nature of their work, and the dynamics of their localisation and geographies.

**Discussant:** Prof. Dr. Gregory Jackson, FU Berlin (tbc)



**IRS**  
Leibniz Institute for  
Regional Development  
and Structural Planning

IRS | Flakenstraße 28-31 | 15537 Erkner | [www.irs-net.de](http://www.irs-net.de)  
Contact: Dr. Karina Böhm | Tel + 49 3362 793-204 | e-mail [boehm@irs-net.de](mailto:boehm@irs-net.de)



27th March 2014  
3.00 pm – 5.00 pm  
IRS, Erkner



Invitation  
to the 3<sup>rd</sup> IRS INTERNATIONAL LECTURE  
on Society and Space

## Producing through curation: the economic geographies of curation and curators

**Dominic Power**

### **Vita:**

Dominic Power is Professor in Economic Geography, and Director of the Centre for research on Innovation and Industrial Dynamics (CIND) at Uppsala University, Sweden. He received his DPhil from Oxford University in 1998. Dominic is a leading international expert in the area of creative and culture-based industries, innovation and public policy, and regional industrial competitiveness. He has published over 70 articles, books, and reports on these topics and has lectured at major scientific and policy conferences around the world. Dominic's research agenda focuses on the geographical foundations of business competencies and competitiveness and on the economic geography of contemporary economic change. Principally a series of interlinked projects on the cultural industries form the main focus of his research work. Dominic has worked as a policy advisor to various firms, European governments and regional authorities: including Swedish Innovation Authority, the Nordic Council of Ministers, Innovation Norway, Icelandic Government, the Nordic Innovation Center, the European Commission DG Enterprise and Industry.



Leibniz Institute for  
Regional Development  
and Structural Planning

IRS | Flakenstraße 28-31 | 15537 Erkner | [www.irs-net.de](http://www.irs-net.de)  
Contact: Dr. Karina Böhm | Tel + 49 3362 793-204 | e-mail [boehm@irs-net.de](mailto:boehm@irs-net.de)