



introducing

the creative industries

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Rosamund Davies and Gauti Sigthorsson





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Accession no. **M 0149600**

Date received **13 JUL 2016**

Call no.

338.444

D 257 I

2013

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SAGE Publications Ltd
1 Oliver's Yard
55 City Road
London EC1Y 1SP

SAGE Publications Inc.
2455 Teller Road
Thousand Oaks, California 91320

SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd
B 1/1 Mohan Cooperative Industrial Area
Mathura Road
New Delhi 110 044

SAGE Publications Asia-Pacific Pte Ltd
3 Church Street
#10-04 Samsung Hub
Singapore 049483

Editor: Mila Steele
Editorial assistant: James Piper
Production editor: Imogen Roome
Copyeditor: Sarah Bury
Proofreader: Kate Harrison
Indexer: Caroline Eley
Marketing manager: Michael Ainsley
Cover design: Lisa Harper
Typeset by: C&M Digitals (P) Ltd, Chennai, India
Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd,
Croydon, CR0 4YY



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First published 2013

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2012949657

British Library Cataloguing in Publication data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-1-84920-572-6

ISBN 978-1-84920-573-3 (pbk)

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Acknowledgements

We are grateful for the help, support and encouragement of those who helped us develop and write *Introducing the Creative Industries: From Theory to Practice*. Thanks to our colleagues in the Department of Communication and Creative Arts at the University of Greenwich, and of course to our students on Working in Media and Creative Industries.

Rosamund would like to thank Angie Daniell, Marcelle Bernstein, Brigid Davies and most of all Luke Clancy for their interest, help and support in the research and writing of this book. Thanks also to Marley Davies for putting up with me working at weekends and in the holidays for the last two years.

Gauti would like to thank for the opportunity to refine elements of this project through conference presentations: Futuresonic, In the City Music Conference, The Reykjavík Academy, University of Westminster, Erasmus University, the Cultural Studies Association, American Comparative Literature Association, Martin Barker at Aberystwyth University, and David Hesmondhalgh and Helen Kennedy at the University of Leeds. Thanks to Jón Ólafsson and Njörður Sigurjónsson for conversations and writer's retreats at Bifröst University. For inspiration, suggestions and help along the way: Steve Kennedy, Alev Adil, David Jeneman, Andrew Knighton, Margrét Sigrún Sigurðardóttir, Bjargey Ólafsdóttir, Andrew Carmichael, Jobeda Ali, Kostas Maronitis, Joy White, Neil Percival, and David Berry. For their many contributions, thanks to Paul Bay, Börkur Sigthorsson, and Vera Júlíusdóttir. *In memoriam* and with much gratitude to Anna Kristjana Torfadóttir (1949–2012).

Finally, we would like to thank our numerous interviewees, many of whom wish to remain anonymous – without their generosity this book would not exist.

Introduction:

How to Use This Book

The creative industries is a metaphor, which implies that creative production has been industrialized, set up in factory-like structures and managed along the same principles as the manufacture of any other mass-market goods. This is a simplification, but a useful one because it calls attention to the fact that, like any other industry, the creative industries are driven by the work of people. Therefore, while we rely on an extensive range of published sources, we have gone out and interviewed a wide range of creative practitioners, whose stories and insights inform most chapters of this book.

We do not confine ourselves to a specific area of the creative industries, for example audiovisual production, music, games, or publishing. Instead, we look at the creative industries by asking what the different specialisms share. There are great differences between the people we interview, in terms of expertise, skill sets, working conditions and economic circumstances. However, they share certain key concerns that provide us with the overarching themes of this book.

First, we look at the relationship between creativity and commerce. Legions of people make their creativity their profession – generating creative products or services – and they have been doing that for centuries. Artists, artisans, craftspeople, writers, performers, entertainers, musicians – they have been around for some time, and they are likely to continue to do so, but how (and whether) they make a living off their words, images and sounds is an entirely different question.

Second, we consider the cultures and routines of work in the creative industries. We look at what creative workers do, how they do it, and under what circumstances. Again, we are interested in shared cultures, routines and practices across specialist sectors, for example how freelancing makes networking necessary whether you work in advertising, fine arts or media production.

Third, we introduce the business structures that creative workers inhabit – commissioning, client-briefs, financing and entrepreneurship. While they may seem rather abstract, business structures influence the everyday lives of creative practitioners. For example, the ways in which content is commissioned (e.g., for radio, TV or a magazine) makes its mark on income, work habits and the social relationships among creative workers. How they find new business and perform their work imposes certain strictures and opens up possibilities.

The aim of this book is to expand our readers' horizons by showing how the various specialisms within the creative industries depend on one another for ideas, skills and talent. Different sectors share many of the same characteristics, and the skills and talents that apply to one apply in another. Someone starting out in the creative industries might begin in one area and migrate to another because an opportunity presented itself. The creative industries change very rapidly, new trends, products, technologies and markets emerge, while others fade out of fashion or become economically unviable. If there is one thing we would like to accomplish with this book, it is to help our readers spot the opportunities when they come along and take advantage of them.