
**WHAT'S IN A NAME?
TYPIFYING ARTIST ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN COMMUNITY BASED TRAINING**

Paul Bonin-Rodriguez, University of Texas at Austin

Abstract

This article deploys the term “artist-producer” to respond to Gary D. Beckman’s (2007) call for an effective definition for artist entrepreneurship, one that illustrates the productive work that artists do and counters longstanding romantic notions of artists as creative geniuses who are unconcerned with commerce. Unpacking the term entrepreneur historically and focusing on its troubling relationship to class, race, and gender, even among entrepreneurship scholars, I illustrate how and why many artists still resist the de facto entrepreneur label even as they take what many identify as entrepreneurial approaches. Returning to Beckman’s domain of training, though outside of the university setting, I show how a number of contemporary community-based artist training and professional development programs across the U.S. reflect, even nurture, the longstanding artist ambivalence to entrepreneurship even as they fulfill some of its key dynamics; moreover, I note how these programs are creating a very specific approach to entrepreneurship, or entrepreneurs, by training what I call “artist-producers” – artists capable of balancing both their expressive ambitions with their material concerns in strategic ways. Ultimately, the artist-producer designation illustrates what many scholars, artists and arts organizers talk about when we talk about artist entrepreneurship; it defines a type of entrepreneurship that by its very structure acknowledges the nation’s weak cultural infrastructure and offers a collaborative, productive, even sustainable way of working for artists.

Introduction

At the close of his 2007 national study of emerging arts entrepreneurship programs in higher education, Gary D. Beckman offers three key conditions needed to build and sustain a thriving and relevant curricula: “reassessing the nineteenth-century romantic aesthetic in arts education; supportive and visionary leadership; and defining entrepreneurship in a manner that informs and guides the effort” (p. 102). In recognition of concerns articulated in Beckman’s findings and in support of his final point especially, I submit that the three conditions are not distinct but complexly related.¹ In the U.S. especially, artists’ working practices – those daily tasks that often reflect entrepreneurialism in spirit – require a type of leadership that easily goes unrecognized, especially among artists who discount their labor and market value when bringing their work to the public (Caves, 2000; Kreidler, 2000). Artists’ invalidation of the “entrepreneur” label may indeed be due to longstanding romantic notions of the individual, high-minded artist, inspired to create and unconcerned with commerce (Abbing, 2002). The failure to deliver a good definition of entrepreneurship may also come from many working artists’ resistance, politically and methodologically, to the “entrepreneur” label (Mulcahy, 2003; Nunberg, 2003). For many artists and scholars alike, the modern-day “entrepreneur” arrives at the concert hall with extra baggage, namely capitalism’s inability to offer equitable access across the divides of race, culture, class, and gender (Basu & Werbner, 2001; Knight, 2005), as well as the dismantling of progressive and inclusive social programs enabled by this moment’s extreme of capitalism, neoliberalism (Duggan, 2003; Knight, 2005; Markusen, 2006; Valdez, 2011). Concerns about social and economic exclusion are often and easily evident to artists marginalized by identity or position, as well as those artists whose works may privilege progressive messages over material gains. Beckman’s research in both the 2007 study and *Disciplining the Arts: Teaching Entrepreneurship in Context* (2010), the anthology about college fine arts curricula he edited, reflects the rich development of entrepreneurship studies primarily in music. As an artist-scholar of performance who is currently researching artist training and professional development (ATPD) programs in communities nationwide with the desire to bridge university curricula with the post-baccalaureate re-training pursued by working artists, I believe a broader understanding of entrepreneurship’s ambivalent reception can support deeper thinking about what is unique to artist identity and business practice. This

type of semantic critique may even support how fine arts higher education programs respond to increasing concerns about efficacy (Dempster, 2011, pp. 13-14). Moreover, this type of critique offers artists, arts organizers, and teachers a clearer sense of why multiple fittings may still be required to tailor the term to explain effective artistic practice.

To support an expansive approach to artist entrepreneurship practice and pedagogy, this article addresses three aspects of the term's reception and usage. First, I illustrate the conflict that many artists may have with the notion of artist entrepreneurship in light of traditional business, managerial, and economic definitions of the term (Beckman, 2010; Jackson et al., 2003; Preece, 2011). Second, I introduce the term "artist-producer" to frame a specific type of artist entrepreneurship being advanced in today's artist markets in the U.S., particularly in the nonprofit sector where a decade of study and program implementation for artist capacity building has wrought innovations and forged new alliances. I do not promote the term as a wholesale replacement for artist entrepreneurship – although for many artists with whom I have spoken a substitution would be welcome. Instead, taking into account classical definitions of entrepreneurship, I am focusing on the specific approaches to artist capacity proposed by cultural programs in conflict over the term and demonstrating how their particular focus is on a very narrow set of entrepreneurial concerns that are neither burdened by political resistance, nor fully representative of entrepreneurship's repertoire. Finally, I demonstrate how an ambivalent and limited approach to artist entrepreneurship manifested and maintained by a host of community-based ATPD programs are cultivating a constituency of artists ready to challenge the entrepreneur label, or not, while still deploying what many will recognize as core entrepreneurial drives in support of thriving careers.

My intent is to offer a picture of artist training in a moment of crisis and to illustrate how that crisis draws heavily from the presumption that artists should also see themselves as businesspeople. My observations are drawn from entrepreneurship scholarship, interviews with arts organizers and artists, program observations and evaluations, and in the case of Artist, INC, a longitudinal study of graduate artists' attitudes toward entrepreneurship. In the spirit of Beckman's calls to action in two related articles, I propose that the tension surrounding entrepreneurship is related to a set of historical concerns in the public sphere. It is in the public sphere that artists' resistances to entrepreneurship continue to be played out as artists negotiate the term in light of their beliefs and practices.

“Entrepreneur”

The semantic history of “entrepreneur” reveals a number of shifting meanings over the last two centuries. While expansive and complex analytical definitions have emerged in fields of business, economics, and social sciences (Eckhardt & Shane, 2003; Gartner, 1990; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Stewart, Watson, Carland, & Carland, 1999), at least one negative definition has emerged in public culture. The French economist Jean-Baptiste Say (1767-1832) is credited with coining the term “entrepreneur,” from the French verb “entreprendre,” which means “to undertake,” in his *Treatise on the Political Economy* (1803). The word was used to describe individuals who brought change to a business practice or product in order to realize profits. Over time, Say's ideas about the entrepreneur's purpose expanded. Writing in 1823, Say notes, “The entrepreneur, whether in agriculture, manufacturing or commerce, is the one who at his own risk and peril undertakes to supply society with what it needs.” (Palmer, 1997, p. 66-73; Drucker, 1985). Adapted into the English language, the term “entrepreneur” eventually included the arts as well at the turn of the twentieth century. *The Oxford English Dictionary* (1989) defines the word as: 1) “the director or manager of a musical institution,” 2) “one who ‘gets up’ performances,” and 3) “one who undertakes a business enterprise and bears responsibility for profit or loss.”²

Linguist Geoffrey Nunberg (2004) argues that between the 1920s and 1950s, entrepreneurs in the U.S. were more commonly understood as individuals who engaged in unsavory, even illegal business practices and concludes that the word was not often used in polite discourse.³ Interestingly, during the same period that Nunberg observes a popular silence on the term, the classical liberal economists of the Austrian School F. A. Hayek and Ludwig von Mises were penning works that have been significant to both entrepreneurship theory and neoliberal thought.⁴ Nunberg asserts that during the Reagan presidency,

which coincided with the rise of Margaret Thatcher's Tory Britain, conservative politicians and their supporters revived the word "capitalism" to take the place of the euphemistic "free market." Since the word "capitalist" still connoted the robber barons of the early twentieth century and had not yet found its footlights in political discourse, the Reagan administration revived "entrepreneur" to portray an idealized private citizen who pulled himself up by his bootstraps without the assistance of social welfare. The word had journeyed from its theatrical usage to the private dramas of workers released from the social safety net of the corporate workforce and seeking subsistence on a piecemeal basis (Duggan, 2003; Gartner & Shane, 1995; Nunberg, 2004). To many people, the notion of entrepreneurship amounted to "cultural Darwinism" writ large, not only in the arts, but in the broader public sphere (Mulcahy, 2003, p. 173).

The development of entrepreneurship studies over the last three decades in business and economics has engendered a number of definitions, qualifications, and concerns that appear particularly transferrable to artist pedagogy. Many definitions are built on Schumpeter's theory (1954), which positions entrepreneurship as the alchemical meeting of the right opportunities, entrepreneurial skills and capacities, drive, and expectation of reward. Together, these influences lead to a discontinuity in the market, as consumers recognize and pursue innovation (Bull & Willard, 1993; Schumpeter, 1934). In "The Promise of Entrepreneurship as a Field of Research" (2000), perhaps the most widely cited definitional article in entrepreneurship studies, Shane and Venkataraman present entrepreneurship as "the scholarly examination of how, by whom, and with what effects opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated, exploited" (see also Venkataraman, 1997). Taking a more structural approach than Schumpeter, the authors posit entrepreneurship at the intersection of three distinct resources: 1) opportunities, 2) individuals who will exploit those opportunities, and 3) diverse business models that do not necessarily require the creation of a firm. Their work is predicated on "disequilibrium," the notion that entrepreneurial innovation results from asymmetrical information and opportunities (Eckhardt & Shane, 2003; Shane & Venkataraman, 2001). The idea advanced by a disequilibrium approach – namely that opportunities are unevenly distributed, subject to risks, requiring of skill and talent readiness, demanding of an individual's alertness to opportunities, if not a prescience, and even subject to luck – may resonate with many artists accustomed to fickle audiences (Caves, 2000; Preece, 2011; Wolf, 1998). The proposed randomness of success might also read by some as market neutrality or amorality. To others, a congruent comparison of disequilibrium between business and the arts is neither practical nor possible, given the relative lack of resources available to many artists. This resistance may hold true especially for those artists who work primarily in the nonprofit sector, where funds are inequitably distributed in favor of traditional high arts organizations (Cherbo & Wyszomirski, 2000; Jackson et al., 2003; Sidford, 2011).

I once documented and later wrote about a performance festival in which two successive panels of artists convened on the subject of artist entrepreneurship offered two very different, though similarly diffident, responses to the term (Bonin, 2006). The responses on those panels continue to challenge my thinking about the term today, especially with regards to its application in fine arts curricula. The panels took place at Fresh Terrain, an international performance festival held at the University of Texas at Austin in 2003. Whereas the first group's troubled reception to "entrepreneurship" hijacked the conversation, the second group's dismissive approach to the term allowed the discussion to proceed smoothly. All of the artists on both panels were emerging and mid-career performers.⁵ They were also self-producers, either making their work as individuals or within collectives, and creating the conditions for their work's support. Such a model is not uncommon in performance, historically or organizationally. In the field of performance, where I have worked for over two decades, artists frequently take on producing roles. Fundraising for new productions, marketing our works, and securing bookings are just a few of the many actions we regularly perform. Additionally, the expansion of support mechanisms – from social networking sites supporting both fundraising and publicity (eg., USArtists, Indiegogo, and Kickstarter) to granting programs like Creative Capital's Fellowship program – put performance (including theater and dance), visual, and media artists immediately in touch with the tools of management (Lerner, 2002). What struck me most about the conversations then were the ways in which lines of resistance were drawn with respect to class, gender, and race in confounding ways. The first panel was comprised entirely of

white artists – two in their forties, one in his thirties, and two in their twenties. All but one were male-identified; all were New York-based save for one who was from Toronto; and all refused to take on the mantle of entrepreneurs. In the words of one panelist, the term was too easily reduced to “commerce.” As the panel proceeded, they informed the audience that entrepreneurship did not allow for a truth-telling of their own struggling artist histories and hard-knock lessons – credit card debts and humbling humdrum jobs among them. In their responses, the panelists consistently resisted recognizing their privileges, even though their geographic locations in market centers, their success with grants and funding, and their presence in a fairly prestigious international festival indicated they had realized success in their careers. The second panel consisted of two hip-hop artists of color from New York, a Jewish-identified dance artist from Argentina, and a collective of young theatre artists from Austin, all ranging in age from late-twenties to thirties. A majority of these panelists were women. These artists offered no spoken resistance to the term entrepreneur – nor did they engage it directly, other than to acknowledge entrepreneurship as resonant with their individual strategies. In other words, they were willing to be seen as entrepreneurs if it helped explain to the audience the ways that they had built their careers on piecemeal lessons or how they established support for their careers in the communities where their work appeared or took shape. At the same time, it was clear that neither panel embraced the term wholeheartedly.

I offer this very distilled account, including the markers of identity, because the conversations inspired me then and since to take notice of the use of the term entrepreneur when it is used among artists, especially performing artists. Also it taught me to query the ways in which identity position (race, gender, sexuality, age), disciplinary location (hip-hop, theater, performance art, dance theater) and even geographic location (market center or outlier) complicate presumptions about access, strategy, and privilege. For some reason that I could not articulate then, entrepreneurship got under some artists' skin. It is a loaded word that loads differently for different people.

Perhaps it is performance's role in re-presentation that allows for entrepreneurship to remain an active site of inquiry in which its definitions are tested (Schechner, 1985).⁶ For it is in performance and among performers that I have often read or hear the term challenged or recontextualized to address questions of access. Consider critic Jill Dolan's recent description of an early play by the lesbian, feminist performance troupe Split Britches:

In *Upwardly Mobile Home*, too, Shaw, Weaver, and Margolin demonstrated the ingenuity of women trying to scrape out a living by harnessing an entrepreneurial, seat-of-their-pants spirit of determination not often required by people more securely ensconced in the middle class.” (Dolan, 2011, p. 5)

While audiences familiar with the work of Shaw, Weaver, and Margolin would avow the three artists' capacity – collectively and individually – to create lasting careers, their lives and work offer a type of entrepreneurship that troubles class presumptions in much of the same way that their characters do. All three artists have thrived outside of the mainstream theater field, yet they are regularly studied on college campuses where they teach theater and performance as visiting artists or faculty members. In addition to residency teaching, Weaver holds a faculty position at Queen Mary College at University of London, where Shaw was recently an artist-in-residence. Margolin is an Associate Professor in Yale University's Undergraduate Theater Studies program. From their academic locations and residencies, all three artists have the opportunity to mold how emerging artists craft their entry into the field. Dolan notes that Shaw is particularly prone to the seat-of-your-pants approach modeled in her earlier works. In her interview with Dolan, Shaw relates a particular message she tells students:

...And the white students and the rich ones, I tell them, “Get out of school.... [G]et out of this fucking school and go start a theater.. With forty thousand dollars a year you can...build a building or something. Or make a play. Don't give it to this college.” (Dolan, 2011, p. 9)

While Shaw's contrariness to the legitimacy of the academic host site may seem counter to the project of building an entrepreneurship curricula, or even her residency's reception by college administration, her message models the role of the “‘artist-citizen' who holistically leverages knowledge and creativity in service of art, community, and self” (Beckman, 2011, p. 30). Moreover, the juxtaposition of privilege and

race (rich and white) indicates progressive political concerns about equity and access in the U.S. common to social entrepreneurs and entrepreneur ethicists (Bryant, 2009; Harris, Sapienza, & Bowie, 2009).⁷

Shaw and Weaver provide an excellent example of a direct resistance to entrepreneurship. Both Shaw and Weaver, whom I have also interviewed, adamantly resist the label of entrepreneur:

Weaver: I think we [independent performers] are all are entrepreneurs, but it insults me when the word is used, because I associate the word with business, and I also associate that word with Thatcherism and Reaganism, and that entrepreneurial sense of “Okay, if you’re going to do it, you have to do it yourself, pull yourself up by your bootstraps.” And yes, we’ve done that; we’ve always done that. We were entrepreneurs: we made our own companies; we made our own space to perform in; we made our own relationship to universities so we could work. We made our own business, but I don’t like having that business term applied to artists, even though those are the principles I teach when I teach independent artists. I teach students to be independent artists; a huge part of that is being an entrepreneur.

Shaw: But I never would use the word.

Weaver: I never would use the word, no, because it feels so—

Shaw: It’s “independent;” that’s the word. (Bonin, 2006)

Shaw and Weaver’s linguistic negotiation, embracing the spirit of entrepreneurship while dismissing the term on the grounds of a political history worked out in public discourse illustrates a tension faced by many with whom I have spoken.

At the same time, their use of the word “independent” hardly embraces what has been one of the richer aspects of their careers. Both Shaw and Weaver have always worked as collaborative artists. They were founding members of the WOW Café (Women One World), “one of the best known spaces for women’s performances in New York” (Case, 1996, pp. 7-8). The independence that Weaver seeks is from commerce, and the word’s appearance as a substitution offers the artists a way to distance them from artist entrepreneurship entirely. In this case especially, “independent’s” connotation (as separate, distinct) is counterintuitive to the careers it is said to describe. The phrases “We built,” “our...companies,” “our...space,” and “our relationship,” reflect the collaborative ethos of feminist companies and Split Britches’ significance in that movement (Canning, 1996; Case, 2005; Dolan, 2011). Feminist companies were founded in resistance to the patriarchal, male business of the free market and built on close, regular collaborative alliances, an indifference to organization, and a distrust of business as usual (Canning, 1996, p. 205).

Feminist artists in the 1980s also benefitted from the knowledge gleaned from the Chicano and Civil Rights Movements of the preceding decades, when audiences were understood not as disengaged spectators, but allies who had come to receive marching orders and turn to action (pp. 177-178). Moreover, Weaver’s familiarity with the pro-business Thatcher and Reagan years is not only a gesture to the period of Split Britches’ founding in 1981, but also a history known and keenly felt by many artists, myself included, who lived and worked through those years, which included the Culture Wars (Brenson, 2001). Consequently, the historical knowledge that Beckman proposes begs for both an illustration of nineteenth century precedents, as well as more contemporary concerns, such as the advance of neoliberal agenda in which the progressive concerns and needs of individuals and communities are pushed aside for business interests.

For artists like Shaw who stand against entrepreneurship on the grounds of cultural, social, and economic exclusion and marginalization, the careers of hip-hop artists provide a test case for artist entrepreneurship, as well as a cogent example of how race and gender can complicate presumptions. The growth of hip-hop over the last two decades has been a significant cultural, social and economic force, changing the lives and hopes of many artists of color. In the 1990s, hip-hop contributed “to a 45 percent growth in Black-owned business in the United States” and brought to prominence and wealth the lives of many individuals who moved from the streets to mogul status in quick time, including Russell Simmons, Sean “P-Diddy” Combs, and Shawn “Jay-Z” Carter (Charnas, 2010, pp. x-xii). One of the most adamant

avowals of artist entrepreneurship has been Jay-Z's *Decoded* (2010), which outlines how his song lyrics document his transition from street hustler and drug dealer to hip-hop tycoon. Jay-Z makes clear that in making the transition he merely traded one hustle for another:

There's a sick fascination with... artists so conflicted about making money from their art – which so often means making money from their pain and confusion and dreams.... This is a game people sometimes play with musicians: that to be real, to be authentic, you have to hate money... But whoever said that artists shouldn't pay attention to their business was probably someone with their hand in some artist's pocket. (2010, p. 168)

Interestingly, Jay-Z's embrace of the market is offered not as a resistance to business models, but as a safeguard against the exploitation that musicians, and especially musicians of color, have historically faced (Basu & Werbner, 2001; Savran, 2009). Counter to Shaw and Weaver, the hip-hop musicians commonly referred to as entrepreneurs operate as an "ethnic enclave" in a well-resourced for-profit industry (Basu & Werbner, 2001). Their particular achievements, while hailed as an example of ethnic entrepreneurship and increased access for people of color and artists, do not easily translate to the many artists whose disciplines are not as traditionally or currently marketable or driven by a popular industry (Jackson et al., 2003).

Jay-Z's example does not acknowledge the privileges afforded by gender or the disproportionate representation of male hip-hop moguls. Recent studies show how the structures of access and oppression are determined by "three interlocking systems of power and oppression: capitalism, patriarchy, and White supremacy" (Valdez, 2011, p. 4). Sociologist Zulema Valdez adopts the term "embedded market" to describe how institutional structures may be constructed to provide access to one or more social constructs of race, class, gender, or ethnicity, while still manifesting multiple forms of oppression to the groups as a whole. The social and financial capital accrued by Jay-Z's black male predecessors have created the conditions for his access, but not necessarily for women, or men of color as a whole. The mogul's clear accomplishments do fit with more established notions of "ethnic entrepreneurship" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, p. 84), a term Valdez critiques for conflating class and ethnicity and hiding privileges generally reserved for males and the middle-class (p. 27). Embedded markets help explain how entrepreneurial approaches can differ according to social location. For artists, the embedded market may yet extend to discipline and geographic location, the access established by preceding generations, the subject matter of an artist's work, and her ability to connect with a supportive community.

As evidenced by these examples, artists who question entrepreneurship when describing their careers do so to avoid having commercial definitions overshadow the public concerns of their work. They seek a more nuanced definition for how their work balances private, material concerns (sustainability, growth) with their public aims, which are manifested in what their work says and whom it reaches. Some seek a distance from a neoliberal agenda. Others are acknowledging a complex infrastructure for cultural work in the U.S., one that intersects for profit, nonprofit, community, and government entities (Markusen, Gilmore, Johnson, Levi, & Martinez, 2006), as well as an inadequate national cultural infrastructure (Cherbo & Wyszomirski, 2000; Kammen, 2000). If entrepreneurship is to be the rubric under which artists are trained and organized, then its definition must be specifically developed and, much like the business and economics definitions, incrementally determined.

"Artist-Producer"

What I describe as the "artist-producer" has emerged as a specific response to entrepreneurship in artistic practice over the last decade. The artist-producer approach acknowledges artists' political resistance to the term entrepreneur; it also provides a frame for the focused, even narrow set of entrepreneurial concerns afforded and promoted by an under-resourced cultural sector attempting to multiply its capacities by promoting partnerships between artists and arts organizations. For more than a decade now, U.S. cultural policy and practice has been devoted to diagnosing the conditions under which artists work and developing models that support and recognize artists' contributions to society (Gaugin, 2008; Jackson, 2009; Jackson et al., 2003; Markusen et al., 2006). The landmark publication of *Investing*

in Creativity: A Study of the Support Structure for U.S. Artists (2003) codified the domains in which artists found their livelihood most challenged: “validation, demands/markets, material supports, training and professional development, communities and networks, and information” (p. 8). The study depicted a vital, though under-resourced arts infrastructure in the U.S. The establishment of Leveraging Investments in Creativity (LINC) in 2003, “a ten-year initiative dedicated to changing the lives of artists in the United States,” sought to capitalize on and support continuing research and development for an artist constituency more capable of addressing its material concerns and partnering with local arts organizations. Now in its final year, LINC is currently assessing its accomplishments (LINC, 2012a, 2012b).

Preceding LINC, the Creative Capital Foundation emerged in 1999 with an innovative model for arts philanthropy by applying venture capital concepts to traditional grant giving:

[These core ideas include] making a long-term commitment to a project; providing financial support beyond the initial award, assuming benchmarks are met; an interest in capacity building; a commitment to providing services and assistance in addition to financial support; an interest in measurable outcomes; working to attract other investors/contributors to the project; and the desire for financial return on investment. (Creative Capital, 2004, p. 2)

These goals outlined by Creative Capital are manifest in its multi-phased, multi-year approach to support. The foundation’s grant programs in “Emerging Fields,” “Literature,” “Film/Video,” “Performing Arts,” and “Visual Arts” challenge artists to build their careers by adequately resourcing and capitalizing on each project. Creative Capital’s direct modes of support include artist training in its Professional Development Program (PDP) as well as technical assistance and artist marketing on its own website (<http://creative-capital.org/artistprojects/>). Though its reach is small, Creative Capital responds to many of the domains of need outlined in *Investing in Creativity*; it is a validating organization providing direct support, training, and networking, and paving the way for artists to access multiple markets (Jackson et al., 2003, p. 43). Creative Capital’s work broadly addresses traditional definitions of entrepreneurship: it is focused on opportunities, individuals who will exploit opportunities, and diverse business models that do not require the development of a separate organization, but instead rely on the partnership between an artist and arts organizations (Atlas, Brunner, & DeNobriga, 2005).

Despite the apparent applicability of Creative Capital’s core concepts to traditional entrepreneurship (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000) – and even its use of the “term venture capitalism” – the organization has been sparing in its use of the term “entrepreneur,” using it descriptively, if at all (<http://creative-capital.org>). The foundation’s entrepreneurial reticence may well be connected to the organization’s political beginnings in 1999. From the outset, the Creative Capital Foundation presented itself as a response to the right-wing attacks on arts and culture during the Culture Wars (Dobrzynski, 1999). What Creative Capital programming proposes is that artists working in the U.S. have the responsibility for crafting and responding to organizational needs of their creative projects, effectively becoming producers of their work.

The artist-producer designation is particularly relevant in the nonprofit and community sectors, where the nation’s artists, in towns and cities away from major arts centers, emerge or live and create work in places where a strong arts market does not exist (Gaugin, 2008; Jackson, 2002; Markusen et al., 2006). More so than a portmanteau blending artist and entrepreneur – like “artpreneur,” a term used by The Artist as an Entrepreneur Institute’s (AEI) founders, or “Actorpreneur,” a course taught by the Tony Award-winning actress Tonya Pinkins (<http://www.speaking.com/speakers/tonya-pinkins.php>) – the artist-producer designation explicitly names the capable future these ATPD programs hope for their alumna. Put succinctly, an “artist-producer” describes *an individual who makes her work and cultivates the conditions to bring her work to anticipated markets*. Moreover, given that the arts world does not routinely share the same infrastructure or abundance of markets as the business world, the artist-producer title allows for a distinction from the business entrepreneur. Finally, as a hyphenated structure, the artist-producer label is facile. An artist who feels that any one project is too great for one person, can strategically separate the “-producer” and give the job to someone else, perhaps even someone who

readily identifies as an entrepreneur. In this specific case, the artist [-producer] generally holds onto the knowledge of a producer and has the capacity to express how the producing partner can best provide support. Such a collaborative model allows for the ethos advanced by feminist and progressive artists for more than four decades. In all of the training programs I study, artists are not being taught the skills required to support their work, though it is not presumed they will singlehandedly perform all functions. In the ATPD programs I have analyzed, as well as Creative Capital's grant program, capacity building is defined as skills, knowledge, and the wherewithal to build good partnerships in the spaces where artists present work.

With respect to entrepreneurship studies, the artist-producer model acknowledges the very narrow approach to entrepreneurship afforded to artists working primarily, though not exclusively, in the nonprofit and community sectors in the United States (Markusen et al., 2006). Counter to more expansive entrepreneurship definitions, the artist-producer model is person-centric (Shane & Venkataraman, 2001). The artist-producer responds to a host of capacity building issues raised in current policy infrastructure. More than two decades ago, W.B. Gartner constructed a Policy Delphi from business leaders and academics that determined eight themes in entrepreneurship.⁸ Of the eight, two were specifically person-centric: the identity of the "Entrepreneur," which describes persons predisposed to risky, creative endeavors, and the "Owner-Manager," which describes the individuals who, by virtue of their vision and initiative, take leadership roles in their own firms (Gartner, 1990, p. 16). As I discuss in the next section, the focus on small business management in current ATPD programs in the cultural sector immediately positions artists as owner-managers; consequently, even those programs that embrace entrepreneurship are doing so within very specific parameters.

The Artist as Entrepreneur Institute (2004), Artist, INC. (2007), and Artist U (2006)

Observing the process of artist training nationwide, I have witnessed pedagogies implicitly supporting the development of artist-producers, even as the notion of entrepreneurship remains an explicitly contested topic. Moreover, as entrepreneurship scholars will notice, all of the programs – including those that promote entrepreneurship – are contoured or even limited in their grasp of entrepreneurship by the framework of the cultural economy. For three years as an artist advisor to LINC, I have documented artists in community-based ATPD programs reaching twenty different U.S. communities including First Nations.⁹ I have also attended a weekend long Creative Capital PDP. According to the Creative Capital Foundation's website, since the 2003 founding of PDP, 3700 artists have attended the program in fifty U.S. communities, making it the most prolific ATPD program in the U.S. As a vested observer, I have been particularly interested how these programs serve many artists who already have fine arts degrees and their approach to entrepreneurship.

Three training programs in particular have helped me think through the ambivalent reception artists have for entrepreneurship and the more specific artist-producer framework being advanced: Artists U in Philadelphia (AU), Artist, Inc. in Kansas City, and AEI in Cleveland. For the two programs developed by arts organizers, Artist, Inc. and AEI, the word "entrepreneur" still holds merit and provides not only organizational mechanism for what should be taught but also an ideological framework. In other words, both programs seek to capitalize on the notion that artists are deserving partners to local business communities and economies, rather than marginalized service professionals (Keen, 2010). For the artist-developed AU in Philadelphia, the word is flattened and dismissed as an old school model that is neither visionary nor relevant to community. Program founder and choreographer Andrew Simonet states:

The only thing I want is for [participants in AU] to keep doing their most visionary research and to do what sustains them. I do not want them to turn into a science museum or Pilobolus – that's an entrepreneurial model. Pilobolus is a textbook case at the Harvard Business School. (A. Simonet, personal communication, June 5, 2012)

Simonet registers his resistance to what he sees as Pilobolus's formulaic approach to artmaking, but in doing so he asserts that there is a place-based model that is more relevant to artists' lives. Artists U has cultivated a cohort of increasingly capable, productive artists, as have the other two programs. It has also

spawned a number of related community programs, including the Headlong Performance Institute and Monday Planning meetings. Despite their philosophical differences, all three programs share similarities, including curricula, strategies, and commitments. The differences manifested in their reception to entrepreneurship and the accomplishments and outcomes of their programs beg for a greater discussion on the term itself.

In support of Beckman's proposals, I believe each of the community-based ATPD programs assisted by LINC is developing a place-based "philosophical platform that embraces business acumen and provides an arts context for entrepreneurship education" (Beckman, 2010, p. 28). These programs not only offer an avenue for continued training, but they model how graduating students might locate themselves in local markets nationwide.¹⁰ Moreover, through their partnerships, these programs model how community engagement can be a dynamic process of participation and payback.

The Artist as an Entrepreneur Institute (AEI) was developed by Cleveland Community Partnership for Arts and Culture (CPAC), an arts and culture think tank and advocacy center in Cleveland. The course was developed under the guidance of CPAC Vice President Megan Van Voorhis, a dancer who holds an MBA, and Strategic Initiative Director, Seth Beattie, with assistance from other CPAC staffers. From the outset, CPAC worked closely with the Council of Smaller Enterprise (COSE) for Northeastern, Ohio, which has hosted the AEI program since 2010. CPAC's partnership with COSE has been instrumental in the growth of the COSE arts network, and the hiring of an arts-specific COSE staffer, Matt Charbonneau. COSE Arts maintains roughly 500 active members who network or access professional support services, including health insurance, through the organization. AEI is a six-session, twenty-four hour program currently held over a period of six weeks each spring. The AEI participants are provided with a course packet or a resource book, much like a college course packet, that is continually updated. Some artists who have taken the course refer to the book as "the bible." Over almost a decade of existence, the AEI has trained over 850 artists in business practices. Because of the workshop's low enrollment cost (\$100 for COSE members; \$150 for non-members) and open enrollment process, many artists repeat the course. Compared to the other ATPD programs I attended, AEI's class enrollment is the largest. When I attended in 2010, it numbered 50 artists. For several years, AEI has been franchised in Broward County FL and South Carolina (<http://cpacbiz.org>; <http://cosearts.org>; M. van Voorhis, personal communication, June 5, 2012)¹¹

Artist, INC was initially launched in 2007 as Artist LINK, a project created through the partnership of the Charlotte Street Foundation, the Arts Council of Metropolitan Kansas City, and the UMKC Innovation Center. Artist, INC was constructed after a two-year study of ATPD programs conducted by Diane Scott, a small business analyst at the UMKC Innovation Center. Scott still runs the program, now with input and support from the partner organizations. Artist, INC is an eight-week training program. The total training time amounts to twenty-four hours. Like AEI, Artist, INC tuition is \$150; unlike AEI, artists must submit applications to gain entry into Artist, INC. Although Artist, INC does not share a small business partnership like COSE Arts, the organization makes an effort to publicize its alumni and support their ongoing careers, not only through an attractive website, but also through a series of Arts Innovation Awards. Additionally, the partner organizations provide additional funding and presenting opportunities. Each class enrolls twenty-five participants. Since its inception, Artist, INC has graduated 200 artists (<http://www.artistinckc.com/home>; KC Artist LINK, 2011; D. Scott, personal communication, June 5, 2012).

Artists U (AU) began in 2006, under the direction of dancer-choreographer, Andrew Simonet, who collaborates with artists Jennifer Childs and Janera Solomon. Simonet came to the program through the Creative Capital PDP, where he is still a consulting trainer. AU is held over a period of nine months, and only twelve artists participate in each session. Eight of the nine sessions are guided by four facilitators – each of whom individually mentors three artists of the cohort – and Simonet. Every new AU class begins with a full-day Creative Capital PDP session facilitated by PDP founder Colleen Keegan and two other guest Creative Capital teachers. For the remaining eight months, the artists come together for two hours on one evening each month. Between class sessions, each artist will have met with one of his or her assigned mentors at least twice. Unlike AEI and Artist, INC, AU artists do not self-select to

participate – rather, they are nominated by artist professionals and then selected into the program from a smaller panel of Artist U staffers and arts professionals. This program has graduated over sixty artists since its inception. For those artists who are not invited to participate, AU hosts a series of affiliated programs including Planning Mondays and the AU Short Courses. Planning Mondays “are individual hour-long appointments for artists of any genre to discuss a tactical matter or explore areas of planning with one of the AU facilitators.” The AU Short Course is a pared-down version of the longer program that covers the same core competencies. Funded by a network of local and national funders, all AU programs are free of charge (<http://artistsu.org>; A. Simonet, 2012).

With respect to content, these three programs share many similar approaches. In addition to contributing to artist skill-building and increased access and participation in community, these programs also articulate and give hearing to ambivalent concerns about entrepreneurship and vastly different notions of artist business practice. Some programs allow considerable time for artist cohorts to acknowledge their embedded markets and to think through new modes of material and social access and different measures of reward. Others presume that those negotiations will happen in the ongoing alliances established in its allied programs. Through their pedagogies, each of these programs articulates an artist as someone who has the capacity to produce his or her own work. This is evident not only in course content, but in the way that each program delivers its materials and negotiates place-based concerns and access. It is through these two aspects that the artist-producer takes shape as a specific type of entrepreneur.

Each program touches on the same sets of concerns, and the distinctions between them are created by the delivery. Each program features some form of training in long- and/or short-term planning, organizational structures, marketing, networking, audience development, budgeting and finances, grants and fundraising, and legal concerns (intellectual property rights and/or taxes). AEI materials are delivered by business professionals in the community – lawyers, accountants, and marketing professionals among them – who can speak from their standpoint as specialists in the field. Additionally, alumni artists whose work has revealed an expertise in a certain lesson are invited to participate and offer testimony about their own processes. The approach is professional and measured: participants observe PowerPoint presentations, which are duplicated in the program book along with relevant articles, and questions are frequently invited. AEI's approach illustrates Beckman's “transitioning” method of artist entrepreneurship training, in which artists are introduced to new ways of cultivating their markets (2007).

Bringing in local artists and other professionals to speak specifically to artist business concerns is a strategy shared by Artist, INC and AU; however, both of these programs challenge artists to speak explicitly about specific projects they are developing. The final Artist, INC session, “Opening Night,” features presentations of the project to which the participant artists have been applying their lessons throughout. The two AU sessions I visited both featured discussions about new projects. In this manner, both Artist, INC and AU could be said to follow the “New Venture Creation (NVC)” curricular method borrowed from business schools (Beckman, 2007), except that the discussions framing these methods tend to divide the focus between the artist as an identity and the particular enterprise being developed. The discourse in AU meetings especially vacillate between demands for self-discipline and self-responsibility on one hand, and a sardonic or light irreverence on the other. Simonet is fond of saying, “no whining” to the artists in training, and “At AU, we do nothing for you.” He is also keen to compare AU to a twelve-step program:

It's like AA, I'm a drunk/you're a drunk. I'm the only one who can call you on your shit, but if you want to get sober [you have to do the work]. It's like a group of twelve gets together to tell their stories. The only person who can save a drunk is another drunk. Only artists can save each other from a life of self-punishment. (2012)

Key to this construct, other than its conviction that art-making is a compulsion, are two material notions: 1) making art is a daily commitment, and 2) the artist business world is unique. While techniques and strategies can be borrowed from business, arts-specific solutions must be crafted through artist-to-artist relations.

AU group meetings are divided into two sections, with a pizza break in between. In the first section, artists and facilitators discuss current projects and plans. The second section typically consists of a panel of guest arts and business professionals convened to discuss a curricular topic. A session on marketing I attended in 2009 featured a marketing professional, a local theater and dance presenter, and a local choreographer who does the marketing for his own company. Together, the guests parsed out a description of successful marketing efforts, offering visual samples that showed consistency across various marketing pieces (a look, an approach, language), good photos, concise and impactful texts, as well as some counter-examples with identities politely blocked out. The presenters also connected their efforts to better relations with both audiences (from the choreographer) and the artists (from the marketer and presenter). Effectively, the panel modeled how artists are called to balance material strategies with expressive aims.

The artist-producer identity bridges all of these various training goals and embraces both NVC and transitioning concerns. To the artists who want to see their work made, these programs affirm that material demands are insistent. As evidenced by AU, as well as Shaw and Weaver, some artists isolate artistry as a special, even sacred practice that should be complemented by business, rather than overrun by it (Abbing, 2002; Hyde, 2007). They resist the collusion of art with what they see as a politicized term, entrepreneur. On the other hand, a “producer” broadly defined is a maker of things; specific to the arts, a producer engages in managerial tasks to make artistic production possible (*Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989). For the artists participating in ATPD programs, having managerial tasks coupled with artists’ creative concerns invites a synthesized artist-producer identity.

As evidenced by Artists U, Artist, INC, and AEI, community-based ATPD programs cultivate and activate local resources in variety of ways. In my interviews with program founders, they have all emphasized the vital role of local professionals in their ATPD programs. Local arts and business professionals highlight the material supports and networks that are or should be available to local artists. At the same time, the local mentors, as well as the guest professionals, challenge artist participants to study area resources, cultivate opportunities, and know about place-specific economic challenges (Markusen & Johnson, 2006). Furthermore, the ATPD programs are largely funded by local foundations, and each program has been instrumental in the establishment of new funding and award programs, new partnerships and initiatives, as well as the development of websites or organizations that actively promote the artists.

Building multiple partnerships is a common theme to all of the programs, not only in their operations but in their pedagogical goals. Through their work they are trying to define a specific type of entrepreneurial approach for this generation’s artists. As AEI founder Megan Van Voorhis indicates, doing so means recognizing that artists are engaged in both project-specific and non-project work:

Through AEI we try to acknowledge and respect that artists make a living through a variety of means that are directly connected to their art-making (teaching, coaching, direct sales, etc.). Our role is about discovery – helping artists to identify all of their distinct assets that could serve them in revenue development. (2012)

With her focus on assets, Van Voorhis veers from older cultural economics definition of artists who support creative work with humdrum labor (Caves, 2000), and her argument is closely aligned with emerging scholarship. Maria Rosario Jackson of the Urban Institute has coined the term “hybrid careers” to describe “artists working at the intersection of art and other fields and/or in places that are not part of the conventional cultural sector” (2009). Jackson locates artists’ hybrid work in places as diverse as artists who create live-work spaces to bring in revenue and support art-making, as well as artists whose work goes beyond typical modes of production to make contributions to community. The artist-producer emerges in place-based concerns, as in the individual artist who identifies local resources and cultivates ones to support the making of her work. As modeled in the ATPD programs, as well as the “hybrid model,” new resources emerge from the collaborative efforts of multiple stakeholders who are each capable of articulating and claiming the value their work brings to community. More importantly, perhaps, through their locally targeted practices and resources, place-based ATPD programs model a type

of pedagogy that is relevant to fine arts education: they help identify how a local artist-producers should consider not only the resources available to them, but how they can be resources to the community.

Are you an entrepreneur or an artist-producer?

Since 2009, Artist Link has conducted a study of outcomes and opinions among its alumni artists. In some cases, Artist Link has tested at intake, six months, twelve months, and twenty-four months. Questions track changes in behavior or belief with regards to specific tasks, such as budgeting or financial planning, or the perception of Kansas City as a great place to be an artist. Alumni are also asked about their perceptions of entrepreneurship, as well as their own fit with the term. Of the eight classes (200 artists) questioned at intake, only 56% responded affirmatively to the question, "Do you consider yourself an entrepreneur?" For the 5 classes that responded at twelve months, that number moved up to 76%. For those three classes that tested at twenty-four months, 63% responded affirmatively to the question. Those who say yes talk about making their work and making the conditions for their work possible. Some who respond "no" acknowledge that they are not making work now, or that they don't see a need for a word other than "artist" to explain what they do. One affirmative response to the term "entrepreneur" was explained by this note:

Although as an Artist, (artpreneur) I have established short and long term goals with a vision and destination in mind, I am more in love with the journey... the process, the excitement of learning and growing... the opportunity to cultivate my creative calling and fulfill my dreams. (KC Artist LINK, 2012)

In addition to deflecting the "entrepreneur" title in favor of a special, portmanteau definition for an artist entrepreneur, the responder makes a particularly poignant observation. The process is ongoing, as is dreaming, learning, and growing, but the stuff of dreams requires that one "cultivate" one's talents and "fulfill" an outcome. In other words, the artist must wake up and produce.

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Acknowledgements: My thanks to Charlotte Canning, Scott Blackshire, Rebecca Rossen, Cassidy Browning, and Nancy Elder who read drafts of this article, as well as the journal's editors, Linda Essig and Gary Beckman, and its peer readers whose comments expanded my thinking. Thanks also to Maria-Rosario Jackson, Megan Van Voorhis, Andrew Simonet, and Diane Scott for sharing their work.

¹ Beckman observes: “[Some fine arts department heads] questioned the legitimacy of using the term [“entrepreneur”] in an arts context. This group saw the word as an obstacle and wondered how it should manifest in curricula and pedagogy. These department leaders viewed understanding “entrepreneurship” as the first step in constructing future curricula and programs” (p. 94).

² Mulcahey (2003) also details these same definitions, noting their “distinct cultural association” (p. 165).

³ Nunberg notes that a word search for “entrepreneur” for “[o]ver a hundred years before 1965” in *The New York Times* offers up only five entries (n. 2).

⁴ See Hayek's *The Road to Serfdom* (1944) and von Mises's *Human Action* (1949).

⁵ The Fresh Terrain festival was co-produced by the University of Texas at Austin Department of Theater and Dance and Mark Russell, then director of Performance Space (P.S.) 122, a prominent cultural center on Manhattan's lower east side. The producing artists were the ones who spoke on the panel.

⁶ Performance Studies scholar Richard Schechner refers to performance as both “restored behavior” and “twice-behaved behavior” (35-36).

⁷ While not eliding white with rich, Shaw does indicate that both the white and the rich might have better uses for their fine arts tuition money. She also implies that either poor students of color should continue in higher education, or that she does not want to presume to speak for a marginalized identity.

⁸ A Policy Delphi is a method of analysis that defines multiple dimensions of a policy issue by submitting its analysis to groups of individuals who may be diversely invested in it. Gartner notes that his original trifecta of groups included business leaders, academics and politicians, but that none of the politicians opted to participate. For an excellent definition of a Policy Delphi, see Turoff (1970).

⁹ The programs that I study fall into two groups. Of the ten supported by LINC, five have developed franchises in other cities, and an additional five travel to different communities.

¹⁰ In a speech at the University of Texas in 2010, then LINC Executive Director, Judilee Reed, stated that discussions among the ATPD programs had found a common six-year post-baccalaureate moment, when artists began to seek retraining effort. While such a six-year figure may little more than anecdotal evidence, it does invite further inquiry.