From Gung Ho Heroes and Their Tragic Counterparts to Catalyst Characters
Figures of the Cultural Entrepreneur in the Scholarly Literature

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ABSTRACT: The term cultural entrepreneurship is increasingly used in academic research to address the intersection of business developments and creative work. However, the concept itself is disputed. Unpacking varying definitions of the term, this article revisits literature on the topic, searching for the figures of the cultural entrepreneur that scholars create. The article suggests that the literature is dominated by hero figures, who are based on retrospective analyses of successful individuals, and tragic hero figures, who summarize the situation for most self-employed creatives, establishing a bleak outlook. As an alternative, the article suggests seeing cultural entrepreneurs as catalyst figures. **KEYWORDS:** Cultural entrepreneurship, creative work, figures, gig economy, precarity. **DOI:** doi.org/10.34053/artivate.11.2.178

Introduction

Cultural entrepreneurship constitutes a phenomenon that has attracted increasing scholarly attention in recent years, with publications on this topic on the rise since the early 2000s, particularly from 2016 onwards (Bürger and Volkmann, 2020; Dobreva and Ivanov, 2020). During the same period, practitioners in the cultural field have experienced the parallel expansion and predominance of entrepreneurship. While artists have a long history of being self-employed and working in a gig economy, this situation has multiplied and intensified with the growth of the category of creative work, deinstitutionalization processes in the cultural sector, and the transition to online work, where artists are particularly impacted by the growing need of having a

presence on social media platforms to generate income (Bishop, 2022; Duffy, 2017; Nieborg et al., 2020). In response to these changes, a turn in cultural and economic policies can be identified as a growing number of business support programs that targeted creative workers have been set up internationally, promoting cultural entrepreneurship in courses during art study programs or in publicly supported courses offered to self-employed people working in the arts and the creative industries, for example, in the Netherlands, Scotland, Norway and the United States (Kuhlke et al., 2015; Munro, 2017; Haugsevje et al., 2022; Robinson and Novak-Leonard, 2021).

While these developments demonstrate a growing interest in cultural entrepreneurship, the phenomenon itself remains contested. Evaluations of the fusion of creative work with entrepreneurship turn out vastly different in both public discourse as well as in academic literature on the topic. Business studies scholars portray cultural entrepreneurship as a productive strategy of unfolding potentials and creating "dynamic growth" (Albinsson, 2017, p. 366), whereas critical cultural theorists suggest that this neo-liberal entrepreneurial ethos establishes an untenable situation where creative workers "now normatively self-exploit themselves" (McRobbie, 2002, p. 101). In these assessments, the figure of the cultural entrepreneur is defined either as a dedicated and enterprising heroic individual or as a struggling protagonist who ends in tragic circumstances despite being highly capable and committed. Oftentimes used simply as a synonym for self-employment in the arts and the creative industries, which is what critical cultural theorists emphasize when using the notion of entrepreneurship, the term cultural entrepreneurship holds additional meanings pointing to the cultural value of creative work beyond its monetary worth, the innovativeness of creative work, and new venture developments—which is what business studies scholars aim to highlight. Depending on which meanings are activated, the cultural entrepreneur becomes quite a different figure, paving the way for different narratives about culture, entrepreneurship, and work.

Against this backdrop, the purpose of this article is to scrutinize definitions of cultural entrepreneurship in the scholarly literature on the topic, aiming to identify different figures of the cultural entrepreneur that researchers create, identifying the components of these figures. By turning attention to how researchers conceptualize and portray the cultural entrepreneur, this article adds to studies that analyze the discourse of cultural entrepreneurship amongst practitioners. Previous research has focused on practitioners' use of the term entrepreneurship by demonstrating how the term cultural entrepreneurship has been employed as a new discourse in cultural policies (Ellmeier, 2003; Haynes and Marshall, 2018; Kolsteeg, 2013), how artists' own occupational myths play a role in career decisions (Bain, 2005), and how cultural entrepreneurs themselves find that an artistic identity aligns with or (as is more often the case) collides with the identity of entrepreneur (Ball et al., 2010; Bass et al., 2015; Beaven, 2012; Coulson, 2012; Haynes and Marshall, 2018; Loacker, 2013; Loots and Witteloostuijn, 2018; Naudin, 2017a; 2017b; Schediwy et al., 2018; Taylor and Littleton, 2012; 2013). Adding to this body of literature, this article shifts attention from how practitioners have been defining cultural entrepreneurship to how scholars have done so.

By focusing on definitions of the cultural entrepreneur in the literature on the topic, this article argues that the figures mentioned above, which are created in the scholarly literature,

enable researchers to see certain things while overlooking others, and, moreover, that these portrayals made in research may have consequences for how practitioners see themselves in the cultural field when framed as cultural entrepreneurs. As research on organizational metaphors shows, these conceptual instruments enable both scholars and practitioners to interpret and make sense of situations (Morgan, 1986; 2011). In the case of cultural entrepreneurship, it is not so much organizing practices *per se* that are conceptualized metaphorically as it is the individual cultural entrepreneur who takes the center stage in various personifications constituting the phenomenon. For that reason, the notion of figure serves as a better means to sorting through the ways in which the phenomenon is approached in the literature and how this literature not only draws from but also constructs different options (for a comparable example in youth studies, see Treadgold, 2020). As suggested by ecofeminist and technoscience philosopher Donna Haraway, who has written extensively about figures such as cyborgs, laboratory mice, dogs, apes, pigeons, and spiders: "Figures help me grapple inside the flesh of mortal world-making […] Figures collect the people through their invitation to inhabit the corporeal story told in their lineaments" (2008, p. 4). In other words, figures are not only abstract illustrations but also characters with material semiotic existence in their own stories and beyond.

Based on a review of the existing figures in the scholarly literature, this article suggests that new conceptualizations are needed. While gung ho heroes and tragic characters have dominated the literature, cultural entrepreneurs may in practice constitute a different type of figures, which the article describes as catalyst heroes who sustain themselves while bringing about change in others. Building on literature in art management emphasizing the role of community-engaged artists in generating social change, the article then turns to ways in which cultural entrepreneurs sustain their practices and contribute to society. It draws on findings from existing empirical studies on cultural entrepreneurship, outlining the catalyst figure as an entrepreneur made out of necessity, conducting care work alongside artistic work, and operating largely in an informal economy while maintaining their artistic practice through these circumstances. By describing all three figures of the cultural entrepreneur as heroes, a common ground is established, calling attention to struggles and achievements throughout cases. At the same time, the various hero figures also allow for clear distinctions between different types of narratives that scholars create when portraying cultural entrepreneurship. Of course, these figures constitute theoretical abstractions that may be combined in various ways in practice by both scholars and practitioners.

Definitions of the Cultural Entrepreneur

Since the literature on cultural entrepreneurship started growing, a number of review articles have been published aiming to pin down this emerging field of research (Albinsson, 2017; Bürger and Volkmann, 2020; Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; Doberva and Ivanov, 2020; Hausmann and Heinze, 2016; Mazzoni and Lazzeretti, 2018; Rivetti and Migiaccio, 2018). Based on literature searches sometimes conducted in very systematic ways, these review articles present overviews of publications on the topic of cultural entrepreneurship as well as on the related

terms of arts entrepreneurship and creative entrepreneurship, which are frequently used interchangeably but also to call attention to the arts sector specifically or the field of creative industries research. Besides discussing terminological confusion (Hausmann and Heinze, 2016) and the lacking consolidation of the field of research on cultural entrepreneurship (Bürger and Volkmann, 2020), these reviews map thematically what has been covered in the research on cultural entrepreneurship. Methodological characteristics of the existing research have also been identified, showing that conceptual and qualitative research dominate the field. Early on, conceptual papers were the most common, but since the early 2010s the majority of papers have been empirical studies, mostly case studies, often conducted by means of qualitative research methods (Dobreva and Ivanov, 2020; Hausmann and Heinze, 2016).

In terms of content, all of the review articles identify core themes in the literature. Especially, the themes that have been identified are classified as either research focusing on identity and motivations of cultural entrepreneurs; research about entrepreneurship training for artists and creative workers; or research calling attention to business practices, success factors, the role of new information and communication technologies, and the impact of business environments, especially urban developments and creative city policies. While these mappings of themes are useful to get an impression of what has been done, the core issue of what constitutes cultural entrepreneurship remains an open question. As one review article concludes: "[I]t is noteworthy that even in recent years a growing number of articles address some of the core questions not yet sufficiently answered concerning the theoretical foundation of cultural entrepreneurship and related concepts" (Bürger and Volkmann, 2020, p. 206f). Taking up this challenge of addressing the core questions of the theoretical foundation of cultural entrepreneurship, this article adds to the existing literature reviews by identifying and discussing the underlying conceptual frameworks that are detectable in the literature, sketching the figures of the cultural entrepreneur that researchers operate with, which is something that has not been attempted previously. Hence, this article constitutes a theoretical contribution aiming to provide an exploratory conceptual overview of approaches in research on cultural entrepreneurship, mapping the ways in which scholars have presented the character of the cultural entrepreneur.

Various characteristics have been highlighted as defining features across literature on cultural entrepreneurship. Whereas some sources concentrate on one criterion, many raise various defining criteria in combination (Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; Endrissat and Tokarski, 2017; Essig, 2021; Gehman and Soublière, 2017; Klamer, 2011; Kuhlke et al., 2015). To approach the phenomenon, especially three distinct criteria stand out: first, calling attention to the innovations that cultural entrepreneurs bring about; second, emphasizing the field configurations they initiate; and third, focusing on how this group can translate their creative activities into financial value not only in the sense of growing a business but also in many cases in addressing the core issue of how to even sustain a living to begin with. These three criteria can be considered as separate arguments that are worth a closer look.

Building on Schumpeter's foundational theory of entrepreneurship, a number of scholars suggest that cultural entrepreneurs should not be measured on their economic orientation and

performance but rather on their abilities to generate innovations in the cultural sector (Essig, 2015a; 2015b; 2021; Haynes and Marchall, 2018; Hjort and Holt, 2016; Klamer, 2011; Preece, 2011; Swedberg, 2006). This contrasts with the common perception of entrepreneurship as a matter of risk taking in the hope of profit, stressing instead that entrepreneurs are not simply motivated by anticipated financial revenue but are also driven by dreams, the will to conquer, and the joy of creating (Schumpeter cited in Swedberg, 2000, p. 70). By returning to Schumpeter's original approach to entrepreneurship, researchers of cultural entrepreneurship suggest seeing the core of the matter as a question of whether new things are invented and activities are carried out in innovative ways, underlining that there is a key difference between entrepreneurship and enterprise (Hjort and Holt, 2016). In making this argument, a parallel can be drawn between the artist and the entrepreneur as, according to Schumpeter, "the entrepreneur is like a painter; the act of combining things—the essence of entrepreneurship—is a form of art" (Swedberg, 2006, p. 248). Conversely, the "true artist" is said to resemble the entrepreneur, "and just as the economic entrepreneur has his imitators and followers, so does the artist. Both the artist and the entrepreneur are dynamic, active, and energetic and show leadership qualities, while their followers are passive and static and accept the way things are" (ibid., p. 249). Based on these similarities, it is proposed that cultural entrepreneurship "may therefore be defined as the carrying out of a novel combination that results in something new and appreciated in the cultural sphere" (ibid., p. 260), thus highlighting that it is a matter of realizing cultural values (Klamer, 2011). Other scholars working in the field of sociology of culture follow a Bourdieusian approach to make a similar argument about the necessity of gaining social recognition and appraisal in a cultural scene before aiming to monetize cultural activities, suggesting that cultural entrepreneurs first accumulate symbolic capital and then convert it into economic gain (Mears, 2011; Scott, 2012).

Secondly, the term cultural entrepreneurship has been associated with institutionalization processes since it was first introduced by DiMaggio to describe the process whereby Boston's cultural and economic elites managed to define high culture in opposition to popular culture by creating distinct elite organizations in the second half of the nineteenth century (1982). Today, this criterion is not only found in the sociology of culture and historical analyses of the arts but is also a central parameter in research within business studies that follows an approach from neo-institutional organizational sociology. The key point is that cultural entrepreneurs establish new institutions and products that are crucial for field formations and, in that way, generate cultural change (Endrissat and Tokarski, 2017).

Whereas these two defining criteria overlap to the extent that both point to the formation of innovations that change the cultural landscape—with the first approach emphasizing the motivation and efforts of individual entrepreneurs and the second underlining collective processes that relate to questions about class and power distribution in DiMaggio's study—the third criterion used to define what constitutes cultural entrepreneurship is quite different and yet the most commonly used parameter. This last measure suggests that cultural entrepreneurship describes self-employment of artists and other creative workers. This means that it is not so much a matter of generating innovations and changing fields as it is a basic question about survival in

these fields. Multiple studies have employed this definition of cultural entrepreneurship, suggesting that it describes self-employment in an oversaturated winner-takes-all market, which raises the critical question about how to establish and maintain a portfolio career in this situation (Chang and Wyszomirski, 2015; Coulson, 2012; Duffy, 2017; Harvie, 2013; Haynes and Marshall, 2018; McRobbie, 2015; Scott, 2012). Defining cultural entrepreneurship as freelance employment corresponds to the basic characteristics of artistic labor in capitalist economies (Menger, 1999; 2001), which have become relevant to a much wider group of people with the explosion of the category of creative work. However, this way of approaching cultural entrepreneurship says very little about the business aspect of this type of entrepreneurship and rarely addresses business practices that extend beyond one-person companies.

In parallel with these three defining criteria, another way of distinguishing between different definitions of cultural entrepreneurship can be established by looking at how the term is used in the various bodies of literature where it features. In a broad sense, research about cultural entrepreneurs can be said to be conducted within three distinct bodies of literature: business studies, art management, and creative work studies—each of which addresses the topic differently. Though these different strands of research all deal with the topic of cultural entrepreneurship, their normative evaluations vary fundamentally, and each of these three bodies of literature prioritizes one of the criteria described above over the others.

In business studies, cultural entrepreneurship represents innovative practices in art and creative industries that successfully intertwine artistic and financial interests and, by doing so, changes these fields. Particularly the notion of the institutional entrepreneur, a maverick who challenges isomorphic practices within the field, has been used as an analytical framework to conceptualize the role of cultural entrepreneurs (Alvarez et al., 2005; Jones et al., 2016; Svejenova et al., 2007). Retrospective analyses of the career developments of visual artists Damien Hirst (Enhuber, 2014) and Ai WeiWei (Hjorth and Holt, 2016); film directors Lars von Trier, Pedro Almodóvar, and Nanni Moretti (Alvarez and Svejenova, 2002; Alvarez et al., 2005); jazz musician Chet Baker (Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2007); and Michelin cook Ferran Adrià (Svejenova et al., 2007) have been used as case studies to demonstrate how cultural entrepreneurs create field-configuring novelties that fruitfully integrate art with commerce. A different conceptualization of the term cultural entrepreneurship, which prevails within business studies, calls attention to how culture can be used as a resource by entrepreneurs regardless of their business field, such as when entrepreneurs use storytelling to communicate their ideas (Lounsbury and Glynn, 2001; 2019). This approach contributes to entrepreneurship research in general and sees culture and artistic forms as communication tools and strategies.

While studies of cultural entrepreneurs as institutional entrepreneurs demonstrate Schumpeter's and DiMaggio's defining criteria about being driven by dreams in generating novelties and establishing practices that change the existing field, these studies also happen to focus on cases of unquestionable triumph. By examining the careers of world-famous men who have made important contributions to well-established fields of art and culture, the figure of the cultural entrepreneur in these studies is a hero who succeeds. This heroic figure may have struggled

in their early days, but they have managed to create outstanding innovations, have become artistically renown for them, and their artistic accomplishments have ultimately generated economic prosperity, which indicates that success on both registers of worth are intertwined and not oppositional. In that way, this narrative affirms both the storyline of the heroic entrepreneur who pushes through and succeeds due to their exceptional abilities and the romantic myth of the artistic genius who creates *ex nihilo* (Negus and Pickering, 2004).

Turning this ideal upside-down, focusing on its dark side, the interdisciplinary and rapidly growing field of creative work studies shows not only how difficult it is for the majority of cultural entrepreneurs to succeed but also how the iconic figure of the conquering hero becomes a myth that legitimizes hardship and precarious working conditions (Banks et al., 2013; Gill, 2002; 2014; Gill and Pratt, 2008; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2010; 2011; McRobbie, 1998; 2002; 2015). Particularly the figure of the autonomous avant-garde artist who is self-motivated, creates freely, breaks conventions, and establishes new paradigms has been recuperated and has become a paradigmatic neo-liberal role model worker (de Peuter, 2008), a figure that has travelled from a tiny art world to society at large with the rise of the creative class, the creative industries, and the creative *dispositif* that pertains to everyone today (Boltanski and Chiapello, 2005; Lazzarato, 2005; Reckwick, 2017). Supported by rich empirical material from research on real-time career making, creative work studies present the cultural entrepreneur as a tragic hero who acts morally, who is competent and passionate but ends up in an unhealthy situation of self-exploitation when attempting to live out the legend of the heroic cultural entrepreneur, thus presenting a contemporary version of the romantic myth of the bohemian, starving artist.

Clearly, this body of literature centers around the defining criterion of cultural entrepreneurship as an issue of self-employment in creative industries. By raising the question of how to make it with one's creative work, these studies point out the illusory character of the heroic cultural entrepreneur. Documenting how far best practice examples are from most cultural entrepreneurs' lived realities, such as the career of multimillionaire visual artist Damian Hirst, this body of literature suggests that the iconic hero figure does nothing other than proving the rule that these are winner-takes-all markets where the majority do not triumph but tragically fail.

Lastly, the field of arts management can be said to sit between organizational studies that point to ideal scenarios of cultural entrepreneurship and critical creative work studies that demonstrate precarious situations and persistent inequalities, outlining a path for focusing on how to teach entrepreneurship in arts education (Clarke and Stewart, 2012; Kuhlke et al., 2015). In this field, cultural entrepreneurship typifies a shift away from stable careers within established organizations to self-invented jobs that demand a new set of skills. This is also a point that scholars in creative work studies have emphasized—that entrepreneurialism constitutes a central part of deinstitutionalization processes in cultural fields, which change from being regulated and subsidized to operating in new, more flexible, market-driven ways as a result of neo-liberal cultural policies in tandem with digitalization processes. Analyses of these changes tell stories about reconfiguration, if not decline and crisis (Comunian and England, 2020; Ellmeier, 2003; Harvie, 2013; Haynes and Marshall, 2018; Rosenkranz, 2016).

Practice-oriented, art management research about cultural entrepreneurship deals with

how to develop and balance various skills that this new type of self-managed career requires. That means combining a critical stance towards the precariousness of entrepreneurial employment with attention to vocational activities that artists can employ to add an enterprise orientation to their artistic activities (Dworkin, 2019; Essig, 2015b; 2021; Kuhlke et al., 2015; Naudin, 2017b; White, 2022). Activities around marketing become increasingly important when artists become entrepreneurs, and, in general, multi-skilling becomes an issue when artists start to operate businesses with everything that entails—such as customer relations, bookkeeping, negotiations with collaborators as well as self-promotion and product marketing—alongside the maintenance of specialized skills particular to their artistic or creative discipline. In this way, like creative work studies, this literature focuses on self-employment as the defining criterion of cultural entrepreneurship; and overlapping with creative work studies, this research focuses on lived real-time experiences either from teaching or practicing cultural entrepreneurship.

As this summary of various approaches to cultural entrepreneurship in different bodies of literature demonstrates, there has been a tendency to focus on best practice cases, developing hero stories that illustrate how novelties are brought into the world, how fields change, and how they bring about artistic innovation and recognition as well as financial success. Alternatively, other studies have focused on the precarious careers of self-employed creatives. These stories tend to focus solely on the struggles involved in establishing careers in the cultural and creative industries, highlighting questions about how to generate an income from cultural entrepreneurship, constructing a tragic hero figure as the counterpart to the ideal of the triumphant gung ho hero. Methodologically, there is also a noteworthy difference between these approaches: Hero figures are identified retrospectively, which makes it possible to single out the individual and create a storyline that progresses because of the actions of this committed protagonist. On the other hand, struggling cultural entrepreneurs are found in real-time studies of samples of creative workers, carried out with surveys, interviews and fieldwork as ways of documenting experiences. None of these studies have located the existence of the heroic figure who, by means of will and passion, singlehandedly manages to create artistic novelties, which change a field by virtue of being appraised by consecrating art insiders and achieving financial success. Instead, this research seems to suggest that practitioners are falsely led by the illusion that they can bring this heroic figure into being if they try hard enough, blindly following a neo-liberal ethos of exploiting themselves with governmentalizing self-technologies developed to pursue the creative *dispositif*.

However, practitioners may be well aware of the reality of their own situation and chose to act with a complicit attitude defined by capitalist realism (Fisher, 2010). This self-reflexivity is not something that the figure of the tragic hero covers. Also, stories about tragic heroes focus on revealing structural conditions that make it impossible for the protagonist to succeed, thereby leaving little room for acknowledging the coping strategies that creatives develop, and, additionally, oftentimes overlooking what is actually produced by cultural entrepreneurs. Yet, practitioners get by and come up with artistic and creative content, organizing their careers as cultural entrepreneurs as best they can, striving to make ends meet in a sector where self-em-

ployment dominates, organizing private lives intertwined with work, and collaborating professionally through informal networks. To describe that situation, a number of scholars have been calling for the invention of different figures of the cultural entrepreneur to capture what is actually done in practice, highlighting necessity, reproductive work, and informality (Alacovska and Bille, 2021; Alacovska and Gill, 2019; Beaven, 2012; Essig, 2015a; 2021; Luckman, 2018; McRobbie, 2015; Naudin, 2017a; 2017b). Aiming to add to this development of a new figure, the next section will discuss how cultural entrepreneurship may constitute in practice a phenomenon that overflows the categories developed to describe it.

From Gung Ho Heroes and Their Tragic Counterparts to Catalyst Figures

Of course, the careers of struggling, self-employed creative workers can simply be said to not qualify as cultural entrepreneurship. Or such cases can be said to constitute, at the most, failed attempts, examples of incompetent cultural entrepreneurship. Returning to the three criteria for what is considered to constitute cultural entrepreneurship, struggling, self-employed creatives may not perform well under any of these criteria: They may not manage to create novelties that are recognized as such by consecrating field insiders, they may not be establishing configurations that successfully change the cultural field, and they may not be able to generate a sustainable income solely from their art. This raises the question of whether analyses of cases that deviate from the ideal scenario of the triumphant gung ho hero should be considered as cases of failure. This would mean that the majority of self-employed creative workers represent unqualified cultural entrepreneurs— that they constitute tragic heroes who cannot make it and whose stories end with suffering or defeat. While this is certainly a powerful story that resonates with the predominant narrative about precarious creative careers (Comunian and England, 2020; de Peuter, 2014; Gill and Pratt, 2008), it also establishes a bleak outlook with little acknowledgement of what is accomplished, that is, if there might be more to the story of real-life cultural entrepreneurship than just failure, precarity and tragedy.

Aiming to add to the stories of struggling cultural entrepreneurs, this article suggests revisiting how self-employed creative workers manage to get by, maintain their creative practice and sustain a living while taking care of others and contributing to society. The idea is to see cultural entrepreneurs as catalyst heroes whose main achievements are not directed towards themselves or limited to their own self-realization but are made from bringing about change in others. This suggestion builds on literature in art management that has highlighted the role of artists as leaders of community-based social changes (Markusen, 2006; Markusen and Gadwa, 2010; Miller et al., 2022; Novak-Leonard and Skaggs, 2017; Preece, 2011; Robinson and Novak-Leonard, 2021). To develop this suggestion, three arguments from studies in cultural entrepreneurship that have drawn inspiration from general entrepreneurship research will be adduced: that cultural entrepreneurs oftentimes can be described as 'necessity entrepreneurs', that they sometimes act as 'mumpreneurs', and that 'informal' cultural entrepreneurship may be central to understanding how novelties are created by cultural entrepreneurs.

First of all, cultural entrepreneurs generally do not become entrepreneurs because they aim to have a business but in order to be able to sell their work and thus maintain their artistic practice. This is supported by findings from empirical studies, which consistently have shown that artists and other creative workers do not set up their businesses with the intention to run a business and become entrepreneurs but simply because self-employment is the only employment option available for them. To capture this phenomenon, cultural entrepreneurs are described as "accidental" (Coulson, 2012), "reluctant" (Haynes and Marshall, 2018), "unintended" (Essig, 2015b), and "forced" (Oakley, 2014) entrepreneurs. Yet, the most commonly used expression is "necessity entrepreneurship" (e.g., McRobbie, 2015), which is a term taken from entrepreneurship research beyond the cultural and creative industries. More specifically, this term stems from studies of entrepreneurship in developing countries with few other employment options, where businesses are started not because those who start them "take advantage of a perceived opportunity"—which is what entrepreneurs conventionally are said to do—but simply because starting a business constitutes "the only option that these individuals perceive is left for them" (Serviere, 2010, p. 41). In this way, necessity entrepreneurship contrasts with opportunity entrepreneurship, and it highlights that personal motivation does not constitute the only factor in entrepreneurship practices but is conditioned by socio-economic factors. Transferred to studies of cultural entrepreneurship, the notion of necessity entrepreneurship emphasizes the structure of the labor market for creative work.

Secondly, a key discovery from the empirical research on creative work is the documentation of persistent gender inequalities in the arts and creative industries (Burke and McManus, 2009; Conor et al., 2015; Gill, 2002; 2014; McRobbie, 1998; 2002; 2015; O'Brien, 2019; Scharff, 2018). As the survey of the existing studies discussed earlier in this article shows, only male artists are featured as successful heroes in the literature on cultural entrepreneurship. This confirms the gendered character of the triumphant hero figure, cementing the suggestion that the artistic genius is a gendered category (Battersby, 1989). A similar point could be made about race (Burke and McManus, 2009). Moreover, while some studies call attention to the feminized character of the invisible emotional labor that cultural entrepreneurs conduct, not least online when engaging in relational labor with audiences (Baym, 2015; Duffy, 2017; Duffy and Hund, 2015; Duffy and Pruchniewska, 2017; Naudin and Patel, 2019; Whitson et al., 2021), another gendered aspect of creative work concerns how female cultural entrepreneurs set up their businesses. Scholars have suggested that some female cultural entrepreneurs choose this flexible form of employment because it allows for a merger with mothering, thus acting as 'mumpreneurs' (Luckman, 2018; Luckman and Andrews 2020). The notion of the 'mumpreneur' is an emic term elaborated in research on female entrepreneurs outside the cultural and creative industries, describing entrepreneurship practices that are established with the intention to prioritize motherhood—"a business practice that attempts to recast the boundaries between productive and reproductive work" (Ekinsmyth, 2011, p. 104). A large-scale study of craft-entrepreneurialism in Australia shows how cultural entrepreneurs who are also mothers were "hoping to balance income-generating work and motherhood" (Luckman, 2018, p. 320).

Lastly, the informality of creative work is a point that scholars emphasize both with regard

to informal socializing, which is necessary for maintaining project-based employment, and regarding informal ways of organizing production and distribution of cultural goods, as is clearly demonstrated in studies of cultural entrepreneurship in the global South (Alacovska and Gill, 2019). For example, studies of Nollywood filmmaking in Lagos, Nigeria, show how piracy practices established an informal economy that substitutes formalized forms of cultural production (Larkin, 2004; Lobato, 2010; Lobato and Thomas, 2015; Röschenthaler and Schulz, 2016). Like the previous two findings about necessity entrepreneurship and 'mumpreneurship', the importance of informal networks has been linked to findings from entrepreneurship research beyond the cultural and creative industries, pointing to the hidden enterprise culture that exists around informal entrepreneurship practices, which is often not taken into account in discussions of entrepreneurship as an honorable business practice (Williams and Nadin, 2012). Yet, informal activities—in the form of unpaid work, mutual aid, barter and gift economies, favor-swapping, and semi-illegal economic activities such as tax evasion and cash-in-hand wages—feature in cultural entrepreneurship practices beyond the global South (Alacovska and Gill, 2019).

All three characteristics of cultural entrepreneurship in practice underline the collective quality of this activity, thus bringing to mind and reaffirming Becker's foundational argument that art is always collective action (1974; 1982). For creative work, being pushed to start a business due to structural conditions of the labor market means that the question of individual motivation for starting as an entrepreneur becomes insignificant. Integrating work with care work entails that the cultural entrepreneur should not be described as a detached figure but as a figure that is establishing themselves while enabling the development of others. Operating in a largely informal economy adds to the point that the cultural entrepreneur constitutes activities relationally and exists through the connections made to others by virtue of emotional labor and self-organized business practices. Accordingly, this article suggests developing a figure of the cultural entrepreneur that captures cultural entrepreneurship as a practice that extends beyond the individual. Instead of thinking of the cultural entrepreneur as a mastermind who creates *ex nihilo*, working to establish their own legacy, the idea is to turn this around and suggest that the cultural entrepreneur enables the development of others while being constituted by them. In order to offer this suggestion, inspiration has been drawn from Haraway, who pursues alternatives to narratives about bounded individualism, stories with "only one real actor, one real world-maker, the hero," who is the leading figure in combative tales of action where all others "are props, ground, plot space, or pray" (2016, p. 39). Haraway's point is that this figure is "worthless without a bag, a container, a net," and she suggests developing richer "stories of becoming-with, of reciprocal induction"—stories that are not only about the figure of the self-making human (ibid., p. 40). Transferred to the issue of cultural entrepreneurship, Haraway's point suggests that an individualized focus on the singular cultural entrepreneur ignores the multiple strands that enable courses of action, disregarding the fact that everyone depends on support networks around them—and that, at the same time, cultural entrepreneurs play a fundamental role in making things happen for others. In this way, the cultural entrepreneur may be seen as a catalyst for others—for relatives, audiences, collaborators. Emphasizing how the

entrepreneur effects change in others and is in turn produced by relations leads to thinking of cultural entrepreneurship as allowing the positioning of these figures in the context of collective entities such as art institutions, business ecosystems, artistic movements, digital commons, and their personal networks. In this way, the figure of the catalyst puts an end to the portrayals of the individual artist as the sole starting-point, driving force, and end result of cultural entrepreneurship. Instead, the figure of the entrepreneur as a catalyst allows for the possibility of capturing the outcomes of cultural business innovations, pointing beyond the individual to document effects on several registers of worth.

Conclusion

Starting from the premise that the figures created by scholars out of the phenomena they study have consequences, this article has revisited literature on cultural entrepreneurship to discern various definitions. After this, the article has discussed the applicability of existing figures and suggested a new one. By raising the question of which figures have scholars come up with out of the cultural entrepreneur and whether other figures could be further developed to capture more adequately the phenomenon as it unfolds in practice, the article has built on the suggestion that scholarly conceptualizations not only depict existing versions of phenomena but also generate their own effects and thus allow for certain constructions of those phenomena to be devised. As Haraway suggests in her quote of anthropologist Marilyn Strathern: "It matters what ideas we use to think other ideas." (Strathern cited in Haraway, 2016, p. 34). In other words, analytical concepts set up by scholars have consequences—not only for scholarly debates but also for the empirical settings they address. This begs the question of which figures might be helpful to practitioners.

In the review of the existing literature, the article has pointed out three defining characteristics that are used to measure cultural entrepreneurship: that it is about generating novelties, establishing field configurations, and sustaining a living as self-employed—all within the cultural and creative industries. While these criteria are sometimes brought together, at other times one criterion is prioritized over the rest, and they obviously point in different directions, most clearly in the case of the first two vis-à-vis the last criterion. Moving on from distinguishing between these three criteria, the article has suggested that three distinct bodies of literature exist on the topic of cultural entrepreneurship: in business studies, critical creative work studies, and art management. Whereas the first body of literature presents retrospective case studies of successful individual male artists as examples of institutional entrepreneurs in the cultural field, the second calls attention to poor working conditions and self-exploitation in real-time studies of samples of self-employed creative workers. The third body of literature brings these two poles together by presenting a pragmatic approach for developing tools that aspiring cultural entrepreneurs can employ to improve their situation.

The final section of the paper has developed a preliminary suggestion for a new type of figure based on art management research that has called attention to the role of community-engaged artists. With examples from existing studies in cultural entrepreneurship in practice,

the article proposes moving on from hero tales' portrayals via their flipside and those critiques pointing out how this figure is a damaging illusion to formulating a proposal for seeing cultural entrepreneurship as an uneven, precarious, and collectively embedded activity for generating change in others. This move is inspired by Haraway, who advises turning away from stories of bounded individuality to stories of becoming-with. Transferred to the case of cultural entrepreneurship, this means addressing the epitome of individualization, the enterprising self in the creative economy, and investigating cultural entrepreneurship as a collective matter instead. This also entails recognizing the collaborations necessary for entrepreneurial activities to arise and investigating how cultural entrepreneurs themselves affect others both professionally and in their private lives. To elaborate this suggestion, the article has employed findings from empirical studies of real-life experiences of cultural entrepreneurs that emphasize characteristics of this type of entrepreneurship, which are not included in the initial formulations of what constitutes cultural entrepreneurship. The three characteristics that have been highlighted are the unavoidability of becoming self-employed when working in the cultural and creative sector, integrating flexible work with private lives, and the informality that prevails in these labor markets. To address these topics theoretically, research on entrepreneurship developed outside the cultural sector and creative industries has been employed, introducing a vocabulary of necessity entrepreneurship, 'mumpreneurship', and informal entrepreneurship. These findings suggest that while entrepreneurship research has questioned its own foundational assumptions, moving beyond the heroic and honorable image of the individual businessman as entrepreneur (Williams and Nadin, 2012), research on cultural entrepreneurship might still benefit from a similar development.

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