Future Forming: A Rethink on the Creative Economy

Wen Wen
Lecturer, Director of Department of Project Development, Institute for Cultural Industries Shenzhen University (SICI), Shenzhen University, China

Henry Siling Li
Research Fellow, Centre for Culture & Technology, Curtin University, Australia

Creative industries: A spent or emergent force?

This paper is about the ‘creative industries’, an unloved yet fiercely debated concept that originated in the UK, developed in Australia, and has been taken up in China and other emerging markets around the world. Countering the notion that the creative industries are becoming a spent force, we argue that, reimagined on an entirely bigger scale, shifting our focus of enquiry away from industries themselves and back on creativity, on where it comes from, how it connects people and what it is used for, the idea of creative industries – or more accurately the creative economy – enables us to gain new insights into emergent cultural and economic forces that are shaping our future – social, cultural and economic.

Reimagining Creative Industries: A Systems Approach

Tracing the origin and evolution of the creative industries idea, we find a widely accepted version reads as follows:

 Creative industries have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent. They have the potential to create wealth and jobs through the generation and use of intellectual property. Creative industries can include music, performing

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1 See Ian Hargreaves’s article in this issue of Cultural Science Journal.
arts, film, television, radio, advertising, games and interactive content, writing, publishing, architecture, design, and visual arts.

This is the definition used by DCMS (1998), and is still used as an official formula by the Australian Federal Government.¹ In the wording of this definition we can easily discern a strong inclination to confine the source of creativity to talented individuals, mystifying the origin of creativity by locating it only in the heads of geniuses and experts, and thus reducing the majority of population to the status of bystanders (what a waste!). The definition also confines the scale and impact of creativity to particular industries and sectors. This misses the opportunities afforded by defining the creative industries more broadly, as an enabling social technology that involves each and every member of our society, via a distributed innovation system, which, through culture, language, and social networks, embraces each aspect of our society and each sector of our economy.

Scaling up the idea: From industries to the whole economy

Adopting a systems approach, we find alternative answers to the sources and uses of creativity, and cast new light on the idea of creative economy. We regard creativity as a group-made common resource, belonging to whole populations: to everyone, not gifted talents and experts; everywhere, not just in advanced countries; across all of their activities, not just in certain sectors of the formal economy.

How can you understand the creative industries this way? The fundamental answer is that we see creativity in terms of communication, not talent, genius, professional expertise or artistic training, much less intellectual property. It takes two to communicate; the minimal system of communication includes two different components (addresser and addressee). In principle, such systems are characterised by difference not sameness. In the ‘clash’ of these differences emerges newness, or innovation.

Our model of creativity, then, is organised around communication in this mode. It operates at all three levels of Dopfer, Foster & Potts’s (2004) ‘MMM’ or Micro-Meso-Macro conceptualisation of how economies work:

1. **Macro** (system level): Taking a planetary or systems approach, based on Lotman (1990)’s semi-sphere or Vernadsky (1938)’s biosphere (but not simply globalisation, which derives from expansion of trade not meaningfulness) – ‘everywhere’

2. **Meso** (institution level): Taking an ‘all of it’ approach … economic transformation based on newness and innovation, institutionalised via social network markets, but not

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¹ DCMS (1998; revised 2001) *Creative Industries Mapping Document*. London: Department for Culture, Media, and Sport [UK Government]. For the Australian Government’s use of the formula, see: [http://arts.gov.au/creative](http://arts.gov.au/creative).
confined to firms; evidenced by digital media, social networks, DIY/Maker culture, and as-yet-unfulfilled potential of 'users'.

3. *Micro* (agent level): Taking an *everyone* approach, where everyone forms into *groups*, especially during a stage that everyone has to go through: *youth* (including childhood). Thus, we are not reducing ‘everyone’ to individual behaviour (consumer choice), but nevertheless see creativity in terms of individual ‘groupish’ agency.

**Creativity as a Cultural Form**

If as we discussed creativity is generated in communication, then what is involved in the process? We believe that the emergence of creativity is the process of cultural production, that is, the making and negotiation of meaningfulness, identity and relationships. From this perspective, creativity is first and foremost a cultural phenomenon.

In what follows we discuss with two case studies how identity and culture, and thus creativity, are generated, and with what economic implications.

**Shouting Beast: The production of identity and culture in spoofing culture**

‘Jiaoshou’ is a civil engineer by the name of Yi Zhenxing. He works as a project manager at a construction company in a second-tier city of Hunan Province, Central China. The online character ‘Jiaoshou’ used to be *Stupid Dad*, an innocuous term in a local dialect of Hunan. His first video was a videogame commentary, in which he called himself a professor-class game commentator. He then played with the word ‘professor’ and made a series of game videos in the name of Jiaoshou, literally ‘shouting beast’, homophonic in Chinese with the word ‘professor’.

3 *Jiaoshou* was adopted as a username to replace *Stupid Dad* in mid-2008, for two reasons: He didn’t want his ID to sound like he was taking advantage of other Internet users and, more important, users preferred to call him *Jiaoshou* (2010). In this sense, ‘Jiaoshou’ is a user-co-created name.

Jiaoshou is famous not only for his videos, but also for the signature mask he wears whenever he is shown online. The mask is also a co-creation. In my interview with him, Jiaoshou acknowledged that he had drawn upon a funny comic series by Ludougao (literally Green Bean Cake) for the mask. The series, known as ‘face paralysis’, attracted a large following and became a fad among Internet users in early 2007. 4 Although there had

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3 It should be noted that "shouting beast" was used as a derogatory term to refer to university teachers on the Internet long before it was adopted by Jiaoshou as a user ID. The popularity of the term online is an indication of the damaged reputation of the whole university sector, not least because of academic and moral corruption.

4 Ludougao has a blog (http://blog.sina.com.cn/lvdougao) where a lot of similar funny comic pictures are available. The ‘paralysis’ series is available in many forums and BBSs, for example, at
been popular video bloggers in Japan and Shanghai wearing animal masks or medical masks, he was the first video-creator to wear a paper mask (Jiaoshou, 2010).

![Image](https://example.com/image.jpg)

Figure 1: Jiaoshou’s mask and his avatar online
The character on the mask is ‘beast’ and the line reads: I can’t even be bothered to tell you off

The online Jiaoshou has double identities. He is at once a popular video creator and a persona in the videos he creates. By this Jiaoshou has become an avatar, a ‘performed character’ not limited to a fixed corporeal self (Goffman 1971). He can be one or both at the same time, speaking to and connecting with users across age, educational and cultural boundaries, though users rarely make distinctions between those two identities. To a certain extent, the double identities have afforded a ‘third space’ (Winnicott, 1971) for Jiaoshou and his fan-users, a space where reality is intermingled with fantasy, making possible multiple modes of interaction.

In what follows we will discuss how Jiaoshou has negotiated these identities, and maintained the balance between the online and offline, private and public aspects of these identities through his interaction with his users.

**Masquerading, performing and community-building**

As Lawler observes, it is an old and widespread theme in storytelling that we need to wear a mask to show our true selves (2008). Jiaoshou wears two masks: the facial mask he uses as part of his online avatar; and the other, invisible mask which he – as well as anybody else – wears to project a favourable self-image. According to Erving Goffman, that mask or, rather, masquerade, is what makes us as we are. In *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, Goffman compared identity to theatrical performance, during which actors tailor self-presentation to foster favourable impressions based on audience and context. The self and identify emerging out of this process is ‘a product of the scene that

http://tieba.baidu.com/f?kz=370949019, and
http://dzh.mop.com/topic/readSub_7888162_0_0.html.
comes off’ (Goffman1971: 245), a project of collaboration and interaction between the performer and their audience.

Theresa M. Senft has conceptualized identity formation in the Internet space in a Goffmanian fashion. She proposes to approach it through the lens of ‘micro-celebrity’, which she defines as a style of performance that ‘involves people “amping up” their popularity over the Web using techniques like video, blogs, and social networking sites’ (Senft, 2008). Thus, in the online setting, as the offline world, identity performance is a collaborative, interactive and continual process, constantly co-creating and re-creating at the same time. It is conducted on multiple platforms (SNS, blogs, BBS, etc.), and by various means (textual, visual, audio, etc.). Its success depends on strategic choices of one’s multiple identities in response to changes in context, technology and audience.

Jiaoshou knows very well the importance of connecting with his users. He has tried to build a sense of ‘ambient affiliation’ (Zappavigna, 2011) togetherness and co-ownership with his users, making them part of the creative process and appealing to shared experience with them. In his reception speech for the ‘Most Popular Blogger’ in the 2009 Tudou Video Festival, he cited users as essential to his creativity: ‘Were it not for you, I would not have bothered to make videos’.

Jiaoshou doesn’t only make videos for his audience; he makes videos with them. He has a good sense of how new media work and has invited his audience to participate in the creative process:

*I place great emphasis on communicating with fellow Internet users, and I take their opinions seriously. I think this is the biggest difference between old and new media. I constantly adjust my production according to the majority opinion of my audience.* (Jiaoshou, 2010)

As his connection with his users and his identity performance are enacted and reinforced through co-creative storytelling, Jiaoshou has consciously and conscientiously chosen the right format to tell the right stories. As he says:

*As you can see in my videos I use some anime footage from mid-1980s classics, some from post-2000s popular ones. My purpose is to invoke the nostalgia of the post-1980ers and appeals to the novelty craze of the post-

5LeisaReichelt uses a similar term, ‘ambient intimacy’, to refer to this type of bonding. She explains, ‘Ambient intimacy being able to keep in touch with people with a level of regularity and intimacy that you wouldn’t usually have access to, because time and space conspire to make it impossible’ See: www.disambiguity.com/ambient-intimacy.

6 The video of his speech is available at Tudou.com at www.tudou.com/programs/view/p4h68mr70Vs/.
Jiaoshou is connected with users on multiple platforms. He calls himself ‘Pope of Vulsar’ (猥琐教主, literally ‘Pope of the Religion of the Vulgar’), a group with a membership of about 30,000 on mop.com. He has a video-blog with tudou.com that is constantly updated. He posts his new videos there, shares stories behind and beyond those videos, and constantly communicates his new plans and new ideas to users. He has a blog and a Weibo account with sina.com, largely to share and recommend videos by others, a BBS on Baidu.com that is initiated, maintained and populated by his user-fans, and his own website that integrate all these links. These platforms are interfaces between Jiaoshou and his users, and among users themselves. Jiaoshou has more than 4 million follower on his SinaWeibo, his Tudou blog is subscribed to by more than 52,000 users. Since some of the users are active across platforms, stories and ideas posted on one platform are quickly shared and distributed among the whole network of interested users. As a participant observer, I was able to witness on one occasion of the real-time sharing of information across these platforms.

As instant messaging tools couldn’t accommodate group talks among big teams, Jiaoshou turned to ‘web chat’ (版聊) to communicate simultaneously with large groups of fan-users. He used the commenting function of blogs and BBS to conducts these group talks irregularly at the request of users. A chat might last about 2 hours and generated hundreds of posts at the blog, and many of these were relayed to the Baidu forum simultaneously by interested users.

These posts, though mostly casual talk and gossip, serve an important social function by reinforcing connections and social bonds, as Li Shubo (2010) observes, they ‘play an important role in building up trust and a shared common sense within online communities.

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7 ‘Vulsar’ sounds similar to the Chinese word for ‘vulgar’. It is common on the net in China to playfully call a group, a belief, or a pattern of behavior a ‘religion’ (教). For example, Li Yuchun, winner of the 2005 Super Girl talent show, is jokingly called ‘Brother Chun’ on the net. She is spoofed as the ‘pope’ of ‘the Religion of Brother Chun’. A lot of stories have appeared online on the omnipotence of ‘Brother Chun’, of which the catch phrase is, ‘Believe in Brother Chun and get immortal’. They even have versions of the ‘religion’ in different languages (www.hudong.com/wiki/%E6%98%A5%E5%93%A5%E6%95%99). According to Jiaoshou, Vulsar is one of the biggest groups on mop.com. Formed around year 2002-2003, it is still affiliated to mop.com but has also established its own website: www.vulsar.com/vcode.htm.

8 See: www.tudou.com/home/yzx119/.

9 See: http://blog.sina.com.cn/jiaoshouxiaoxing.

10 See: http://tieba.baidu.com/f?kw=蠢爸爸.

11 See: www.jiaoshoutv.com/.
The multiplicity of Jiaoshou’s identity has made it possible for him to become independent of the corporeal self and become a symbol and character. Two markers of this independence are the fan journal featuring Jiaoshou and the commodification of his facial mask. In May 2009, an ad was posted for the sale of Jiaoshou facial mask in a BBS of Jiaxing, a city in the highly successful commercial province of Zhejiang. The ad reads, ‘Facial mask of Cyber-celebrity Jiaoshou for sale, professionally made.’ The seller quoted ¥5 RMB per mask and provided delivery service for local customers.12 Jiaoshou as standalone persona is even more outstanding in a fan-created comic journal called Jiaoshou Weekly. Edited by a user called ‘the King whose ID gets blocked’ (被封号的国王, hereafter King), the journal was a fan co-creation. It had an official website.13 This spoofs the news agency Reuters, calling itself Toulushe (透露社, literally Disclosure Agency), it is the Chinese translation of Reuters read backwards. The journal was not published on a regular basis: only three issues are available. King has cited censorship for the dysfunction.

Figure 2: Cover Pages of Jiaoshou Weekly.14

In the journal, Jiaoshou becomes a comic character born out of an egg, an omnipotent manga icon that spices his talk with profanity, fights all evils and ignores all established social norms. In issue three, it even fights Kongfu Bunny, a comic character created by Vincent, a lecturer and an anime professional at Communication University of China. The journal also incorporated new developments in Chinese cyberspace and commented on social issue through the comic Jiaoshou. On the cover page of the second issue, the two animals who are leading Santa Claus’s sleigh are not reindeers, but Grass-Mud-

12 See the ad at: http://bbs.sogou.com/179396/elbbGEWIt8VIBAAAA.html
13 See: www.tlshe.com/
14 The three issues of Jiaoshou Weekly are available respectively at: http://tieba.baidu.com/f?kz=681022052 (issue 1); http://tieba.baidu.com/f?kz=685630038 (Issue 2); and http://tieba.baidu.com/f?kz=707741349 (Issue 3).
Horses, a legendary animal created by Internet users to mock government talk and vent frustration caused by censorship.15

Although short-lived, the journal as a cultural creation is significant. If the activities of Jiaoshou the spoof creator connect him to ‘personal branding’ (Marwick & boyd, 2010) and ‘micro-celebrity’ promotion (Senft, 2008), where social media are employed to assure immediate and proximate access to personal information, private thought, mundane routines as well as spectacular activities of the would-be celebrity, then the creation of Jiaoshou as a comic character by his fan-users, while it confirms the effectiveness of Jiaoshou’s strategy, is a process of negotiation and co-ownership, and an initiative of active participation, appropriation and re-creation. It is act of co-branding and wiki-celebrity, where users apply social media and digital technologies to co-create a pop icon by and of themselves. Everybody can tweak it the way they like, and own it. Jiaoshou and the co-created journal provide a peep show not only into the ways that spoofing culture emerges and grows, but also, broadly, into how innovation in culture takes place: how ideas come into being, travel, are experimented with, tweaked, accepted or rejected, renewed and retained, and start a new cycle of dissemination.

As we stated earlier our proposition is that creativity come out of communication in communities. The case of Jiaoshou shows that the spoofing culture is a co-creation of technology and culture, users and fans, an engagement with videos as well as each other, imbedded in and enabled by user networks and communities. The collaborative process doesn’t not only generate funny videos, it also creates and negotiates collective identities, shared experiences and a dynamic and creative subculture emerging around spoof videos. The point we aim to make is not how a great hero Jiaoshou is. Rather, it shows the creative potential of ordinary people when they are enabled by ICT to engage with each other around a shared purpose or interest.

Economy of creativity

While the case of Jiaoshou has illustrated the kind of creativity disseminated mostly in cyberspace, with media work as its main output, applying the same internet intelligence to the physical world can also become a phenomenon – welcome to the Maker Movement. Like Jiaoshou and his followers, whose creations were made mostly ‘for fun’, the Maker Movement may have started for fun, but is now gaining attention because of its potential in technological innovation and even in heralding a new industrial revolution (Anderson, 2012).16

15See: Li, H.S (2012) ‘The platform of spoof videos: The case of Tudou.com.’ Cultural Science Journal 5:2, http://cultural-science.org/journal/index.php/culturalscience/issue/view/11/showToc.
16Anderson’s claim is not so far-fetched, if Joel Mokyr’s analysis of the Industrial Revolution is accurate. Mokyr argues that the reason why that process took off rapidly in England, before other
Maker Movement

The contemporary Maker Movement can be traced back to Apple co-founder Steve Wozniak, who built a little blue box for making free calls after reading an article about a device that could crack phone networks. The ethos became widespread among US West Coast garages – legendary homes of the start-up tech company. It was captured by Make magazine, launched in 2005 to ‘celebrate your right to tweak, hack and bend any technology to your will’.

In 2006, this magazine organized the first Maker Faire in California. Along with the birth of the open source hardware Arduino in the same year, the curtain of the maker movement was officially lifted. In 2013, 100 Maker Faires were held all over the world. A small number of flagship, featured and large-scale ‘faires’, organized by or in collaboration with Make magazine, were produced in the US, Italy and Japan (the biggest in Rome attracted 35 million visitors); however, the best part of the story was that the majority of local mini ‘faires’ were based on local communities at a smaller scale, across South America, Europe, Australia and Asia.

Dale Dougherty, one of the founders of Maker Faire, claimed at the launch of first Maker Faire in Norway in January, that ‘2014 is the Year of the Maker’.

Source: www.makezine.com.tw/1/post/2014/01/2013100maker-faire.html.

countries, was because of the widespread presence of myriad anonymous craftsmen, engineers and artisans, who tweaked and tinkered with the headline inventions (steam power etc.), finding innovative uses for them. In short, the Industrial Revolution itself was essentially a ‘maker movement’. See: Mokyr, J. (2009) The Enlightened Economy: Britain and the Industrial Revolution, 1700-1850. London: Penguin.

17 See: http://makezine.com/.
18 See: www.shenzhenmakerfaire.com/post/4535
**Makers**

So, who are the makers? According to Anderson (2012), makers are groups of people using the Internet and the newest industrial technology to make individual manufacturing products. Sometimes they are referred to as tinkers, hobbyists, enthusiasts, and amateurs. They engage in 'microproductivity', producing highly customised outputs in boutique quantities for a highly localised market – but using internet connectivity in such a way that a successful line can be scaled up to global quantities very quickly, or a technique not available locally (say, 3-D printing in a precious metal) can be realised using assets that may be on the other side of the world.

Makers are not all inventors. Instead of inventing new things, makers often focus more on spreading existing technology and encouraging new applications. Therefore, the mission of the maker movement is to promote a wider participation in innovation.

**Makerspaces**

Though, nowadays, people are more and more dependent on (or 'addicted to') online social networking, they still need a physical place to meet and work together.

More than 1000 active ‘makerspaces’ or ‘hackerspaces’ are recognized all over the world. Many of them are organized in gym-style. For instance, in Tech Shop,\(^1\) the first commercial chain of makerspaces in the US, members pay a monthly fee to use the space and tools, and perhaps pay extra for tutoring programs. More important, they meet potential collaborators in that space.

Some other makerspaces are in forms of incubators and accelerators. HAXLR8R\(^2\) is one of these. It has a focus on maker projects that manufacture hardware devices, and offers a 111 days hatching program twice a year to selected start-ups, with funding, office space and mentorship. What makerspaces have in common is that they provide access to knowledge (and tools). Furthermore, they encourage cross-boundary cooperation. In many cases, engineers and designers work together to produce products that are both useful and aesthetic.

In addition, crowdsourcing plays a key role in the maker movement. Platforms like Kickstarter and Pozible not only help to raise funds, but also to raise attention by meeting the consumers in the first place or, to use a professional term, for marketing.

**Made in China 2.0**

Somehow Shenzhen, the first Special Economic Zone of China and the central city of the Pearl Delta Region, has become a centre of maker culture, as it is ‘the beating heart of the

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\(^1\) http://techshop.ws/

\(^2\) http://haxlr8r.com/about
world’s electronic supply chain’. The HAXLR8R mentioned above is now running cross-regionally between San Francisco and Shenzhen, and merges maker creativity with open source manufacturing, facilitated by the enormous mini factories in Shenzhen. ‘Everybody who is involved in making knows the electronics markets in Shenzhen,’ says Dim Sum Labs member Tom Grec, ‘they are nirvana to makers.’

**Informal Economy**

However, this nirvana cannot escape its relation to *shanzhai*, or *copycat* culture. But, when ‘Obama’ cellphones were selling in Kenya with the slogan ‘yes we can’ and Obama’s name on the back, catering for the 2008 US presidential election, *shanzhai* culture has surely made its own way. Shanzhai also influences the major manufacturers: Nokia launched its dual-sim handset largely because of the pervasive dual-sim phones that populated the shanzhai market.

This relates, of course, to the controversy between the open source and copyright models of innovation. Lobato (2010: 337) in his study on Nollywood argues that informal markets have played a significant role in creating an ‘efficient and economically sustainable’ media market in Nigeria. His work with Thomas (2012) also argues that piracy has important generative features and opens up great opportunities outside the formal media industries. Witnessing an informal economy around the globe, journalist Robert Neuwirth believes that the people who work in the informal economy are entrepreneurs who provide essential services and crucial employment, especially in developing economies.

The long tail theory is applied here, indicating that the innovation advanced by makers is as important as the innovation from the heavily invested public or private R&D labs. It is a step forward from ‘selling less for more’ to ‘making more by using less’. This is also reflected in the idea of Jugaad Innovation, from India, which means to improvise and find ways around prohibitive rules and institutions (Radjou, N. et al., 2012). There is also Charles Leadbeater’s latest book, *The Frugal Innovator: Creating Change on a Shoestring Budget*. He elaborates the case that ‘creative communities with a cause’ are the chief source of innovation, making do / making up / making on a shoestring – but for a purpose, often related to improving conditions for a marginal or stressed community: the ‘cause’ and ‘community’ are as important as the ‘creativity’ – and the results may be scalable globally.

Hereby, institutions like Ford Motor Company, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), and AutoDesketc establish partnership with Tech Shop. Governments in the U.S. and China also invest in makerspaces with the hope that the next ground-breaking technology could occur there.

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21http://selamtamagazine.com/stories/made-china-20
22See: www.scmp.com/lifestyle/technology/article/1262979/hackjam-great-minds-tinker-alike.
Boundaries between consumers, makers and producers are further blurred. Therefore, the Maker Movement can be seen as the democratization of design, engineering, fabrication and education, as when Jeffries says, ‘It is more about encouraging empowerment, that is, skill over money, building over buying and creation over consumption.’ Furthermore, it is hard to predict when the new industrial revolution will come to us, what important now is that people are applying the Internet intelligence to the physical world, this is worth noticing.

**Making a Scene**

Maker Faires and makerspaces, as well as Hackathons have caught the eye of journalists as a new ‘urban scene’. Nevertheless, except for this example of technological creativity, design, music, performance and writing are still the dominant forms in the creative world, and each generates its own kind of scene. Cities are where such scenes may overlap and mix, creating an attractant for newcomers – especially among the young – for whom style and peer connectivity are strong values.

Scenes, which originally mean the settings of paintings, are not confined to paintings on the wall, but have extended to scenes in galleries, with opening nights, gatherings of art communities and public shows for all. It is the same for scenes in theatres, which is not just about the act, but also about drinks before the show or visiting a pub or coffee shop afterwards to discuss the stories. The ‘music scene’, ‘London theatre scene’, ‘poetry scene’ and ‘Goth scene’ have all been captured by journalists since 1940s, and researchers have investigated the clubbing scene (see Malbon, B., 1999), reggae, punk and death metal music scenes (see Baulch, E., 2007), etc., from the angle of geography, identity, sociality, and media globalization.

The economic significance of scenes is also explored, as the importance of the ‘night-time economy’ has been recognised for many cities. According to Bennett & Peterson (2004), scenes and industrial ways of making music today rely on each other: a scene is the origin of authenticity and new forms of musical expression, while the music industry provides technology, from the CD to the internet, to that scene for expanding its impact and realising its economic value. Based on a case study of electronic music club in Berlin, Lange and Bürkner (2012) have also concluded that value-creation in production scenes has shifted from large-scale producer-induced media to consumer-induced live performance and interactive soundtrack.

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23 Adrienne Jeffries. ‘At Maker Faire New York, the DIY movement pushes into the mainstream’: www.theverge.com/2013/9/23/4760212/maker-faire-new-york-diy-movement-pushes-into-the-mainstream.

24 Hackathons nowadays often focus more on a social or an educational issue by creating useful software.
In Will Straw’s description, webs of microeconomic activity, that foster sociality and link this to the city’s ongoing self-reproduction, are a sixth form of scenes, after these prior steps:

1. the recurring congregation of people at a particular place;
2. the movement of these people between this place and other spaces of congregation;
3. the streets/strips along which this movement takes place;
4. all the places and activities that surround and nourish a particular cultural preference;
5. the broader and more geographically dispersed phenomena of which this movement or these preferences are local examples (Straw, 2001, p. 249).

This is similar to Currid’s (2007) formation of ‘creative scenes’, which follows the path:

Formal and informal institutions and social events as consumption sites → nodes of creative exchange → social production system → creative scenes form in diverse, open, amenity rich neighbourhood → cultural economy (symbiosis).

Both of the paths for creating a scene have been through consumption to production – from culture to economy. Above all, scenes generate authenticity and provide a system for the authenticity to grow.

**Urban Semiosis**

In addition, ‘scenes’ are an epitome of urban semiosis, or creative cities. This means that creative cities are those where citizens make culture and culture makes economy, characterized by scenes that are sites for social meeting and mixture as well as friction and ‘clash’. Scenes connect cultures and nurture diversity, tolerance and civility as well as the economy. They coordinate economic value (GDP; jobs) and cultural value (meaningfulness, identity, relationships, boundaries).

Hereby we can answer the question of ‘what creativity is in economic terms?’ It is the production of newness in complex adaptive systems (organized through network-like maker movements and scenes); and new knowledge and innovation that allow systems to renew and change, for themselves, endogenously.

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25 See Hutter M. et al (2010). Newness, as distinct from novelty, is another word for innovation. The difference between novelty and newness is this: novelty is, as it were, a ‘conjecture’ or ‘experiment’, which will not survive unless it is taken up and used; ‘newness’ is the acceptance by others and social implementation of new ideas (see Potts 2011). Newness is thus the use of novelty – it is cultural rather than technological or economic in nature.
Future-forming

In terms of geography, we intend to consider USA and UK as well as emergent economies like China. Whatever model of the creative industries is adopted, it needs to take account of the ‘creative destruction’ that may imminently be wrought on the global economic and cultural scene by the BRICKS countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China, Korea, South Africa ... and one may add MINT, i.e. Mexico, Indonesia, Nigeria and Turkey (and many others).

In all, this paper is about the creative economy as an emergent phenomenon, not a spent force. We are interested in its future, which is uncertain, of course, but may be much more significant than its past, if properly conceptualised, observed and nurtured.

Hereby, the system that generates creativity is culture – not technology or the economy directly, and not individuals by themselves. However, it is in the economic and tech sectors that the term ‘creativity’ has attracted most attention over recent years. This is because creativity has become associated with innovation in the business environment. Thus, creative innovation is a much sought-after quality that is said to drive contemporary post-industrial economic performance. However, creativity is also the stock in trade of the humanities and the creative arts, which (at least according to one way of thinking) are strange bedfellows for economics and technology. This is however the reason for taking an interest in culture, communication, creativity, the arts and humanities, with all their critical and often antibusiness ideological baggage, when trying to understand an economic phenomenon like the creative economy.

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