

Next seminar:

The City as Cluster: Re- thinking local cultural industry strategies.

Friday 24th September 2004. Manchester.

That the cultural industries are highly networked and tend to operate in clusters is well established amongst academics and policy makers. A whole series of 'agglomeration economies' are said to accrue to these CI clusters, providing an ecology within which the fluid, project based activities of the sector can efficiently thrive. Proponents of clusters argue that it is the embedded know-how, the shared tacit knowledge to be found in specific places that give clusters their competitive advantage. In the cultural industries 'place' is frequently held to be 'the city'. These industries are extremely sensitive to place and manage to mobilise the unique cultural qualities of cities to create products for niche global markets. It is this that has driven much of the policy developments in the cultural industries, and has linked with notions of 'the creative city' to create a strong synergy between cultural industry support and wider cultural and urbanistic strategies.

In this seminar we want to explore some of the questions raised by the notion of city clusters. In the context of increasingly globalised production and distribution, to what extent are local clusters possible outside the big urban centres, and on what terms? What possibilities remain at these local levels and what constraints lie upon them? How do local clusters and networks work, and what are their shortcomings? How might city clusters be conceptualised and researched, and how might policy makers and creative agencies usefully use the notion in their strategies?

11.00 Coffee and Introductions

11.30 - 1pm. City clusters and Urban Cultural policies

Ivan Turok, University of Glasgow
Hans Mommaas, University of Tilburg

Lunch 1 -2.15

2.15 - 3.45 Music as a local cluster

Simon Frith, University of Sterling

Stuart Worthington, Manchester City Music Network;
International managers' forum.

4.00 - 5.00 Local and regional support strategies

Lyn Barbour, Creative Industries Development Service,
Manchester

Andy Lovatt, Head of Creative Industries, North West Regional
Development
Agency

5.00- 5.30 Closing session

Location:

Manchester Institute for Popular Culture
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Manchester Metropolitan University
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Further details, and draft papers, will be posted on this page closer to the date of the seminar.

To reserve your place: please email: i.tammaro@lse.ac.uk, and put 'ESRC seminar Manchester' in the subject line.