

The Creative Arts in Higher Education 6 Provocations

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This presentation discusses some issues and opportunities concerning the creative arts in the higher education landscape. It has been informed from my previous roles as a Head of School (Creative Arts), Chair and Professor of Music, an external reviewer of creative arts curricula, and lead investigator of a recent ARC linkage grant on the Australian music exports.¹

It is in two parts: sections 1, 2 and 3 discuss the differences and commonalities between the creative arts and creative industries; sections 4 to 7 discuss the combined activities of the creative arts and industries.

Overview

In a highly competitive and challenging tertiary environment, the creative arts are in the process of redefining its future. The creative arts within the university context is a generic term referring to any combination of the following and their specialisation areas: music, drama, performance, theatre studies, architecture, dance, visual arts, photography, film and screen studies, digital and interactive media, graphic art and design, textile and fashion design. Some of these disciplines are able to be standalone schools with separate budget lines. Others have been clustered into an amalgamated school structure in where budgets are decided at the school or faculty level. As any discipline in higher education would probably agree, the ability to control one's own budget has its advantages regarding decisions about strategic planning, expenditure, planning and a sense of empowerment.

The creative arts is often used synonymously with the creative industries, another generic term. This is understandable considering the same disciplines from the creative arts are included in the creative industries agenda. This will be discussed in section 1. However, one cannot be essentialist and only refer to the creative arts only. This presentation argues that needed is a new discourse about the importance of the creative arts and creative industries, where they intersect, and just as importantly, where they are different.

In wanting to be unbiased, I will not name any institution specifically. To varying degrees, many creative arts institutions are re-examining approaches to teaching; learning and technology. The take up for change can be slow and hindered by staff capability, a federal one size fits all funding policy, budgetary limitations and limited business models. However, it is an exciting time to explore new business models that are industry benchmarked and relevant to the discipline area in the creative arts.

Solutions to the development of new options can be found through networking, partnerships with university, private providers, industry and communities. There are examples of these approaches across Australia, where creative artist academics are redefining and forging new roles for creative arts in higher education.

With so much content being created currently, and studied previously, the need for technological savviness, skills development, increased class sizes and the demand to be industry relevant, the three-year degree model is being pushed. Compromises inevitably are made. What is actually taught and how is it being taught? When are slow and fast learning strategies appropriate particularly in the digital realm? Compressed or modular deliveries work very well for fast learning. Double degrees or the 3 + 2 year Bologna model have been adopted

¹ ARC Linkage Project (LP150100709): The Economic and Cultural Value of Australian Music Exports (2016-2019), The University of Newcastle, Monash University, APRA AMCOS, and the Australia Council for the Arts. Publication date July 12, 2019.

in some areas due to the multi and interdisciplinary implications of a modern day career. But these do beg the question: are productivity models based on delivery and program duration still relevant in a world in which a singular approach to time has become either obsolete or multiple due to digitisation, student mobility and lifestyle demands? It is encouraging to see the emergence of programs that do not rely on limited time lines for completion, are more flexible with delivery (for example, micro-credentials), question traditional assessment practices and the implied automatic power given to the academic teacher, and able to accommodate to a student's lifestyle.

Change is needed regarding funding models. The clustering of disciplines do not necessarily and always provide sustainability unless there is a total rethink about that school's pedagogy, identity and ethos.

While this presentation focusses on the creative arts in higher education, the creative industries cannot be ignored.

1. Creative arts - Creative industries

As already stated, both the creative arts and the creative industries are generic terms consisting of a collection of disciplines shared by both. While they may have different starting points and rationales, they are inextricably linked and one cannot talk about one without the other. Because creativity is a fundamental human activity across all fields of knowledge, it is important not to blur the creative arts and the creative industries.

For example: the world renown experimental art and design centre, Ars Electronica in Linz Austria, is particularly aware of not blurring the creative arts and the creative industries nexus. It emphasises the freedom of experimental artistic practice, but also registers patents for commercialisation based on experimental freedom.² Ars Electronica differentiates between art thinking and design thinking.³ Whereas art thinking is rooted in discovery and experimental practice without any external agenda, design thinking is human centred with a focus on the creation of better products, services and/or processes. Both are important in higher education contexts driven which are being driven by innovation agendas.

Definitions of the creative arts are general and tend to focus on human or personal expression, imagination and creativity. Key to the creative arts are:

- aesthetics, interpretation, subjectivity, ambiguity and symbolic expression;
- technical, conceptual, physical skills and their implementation through technologies;
- an awareness of the tensions and connections between form and content in a chosen medium and their communication to an audience/critical group.

Concepts of beauty, the sublime, realism, intertextuality, and abstractionism also come into play. Some expert artists would say that the beauty of the arts is in their irrelevance.⁴ This is because in being irrelevant, one is able to take risks, explore new territories of knowledge and experience, and not have to justify the work. Such is the power of experimental practice in the creative arts. There are some areas in the creative arts that are excellent for knowledge creation and generation, even if one doesn't know what to do with that knowledge (the art for art's sake argument).

As soon as creative artists sell or license their work, receive some payment through IP or royalties, they become part of the creative industries - a much bigger sector to include software development, computer games, broadcasting, publishing, commercial design, museums, galleries, advertising and marketing. This includes the mythical alienated artist painting away

² Ars Electronica - <https://ars.electronica.art/news/>

³ The term 'art thinking' is coined by Horst Hortner (Director of the Future Lab) and researchers at Ars Electronica.

⁴ Gaburo, Kenneth. (1976) *The beauty of irrelevant music*. Linga Press.

in his/her own studio who could be picked up by a gallery for an exhibition. That alienated creative artist is just- as much part of the creative industries as a film producer looking for multi-million dollar funding for the next project.

The report *Valuing Australia's Creative Industries* in 2013 estimated that the combined contribution of these three areas is \$90 billion.⁵ It defines the creative industries as the following: "Due to their dynamic nature, the creative industries are not simply defined and consist of a wide variety of businesses and individuals. They include cultural sectors like the visual and performing arts, as well as those sectors that are often dubbed digital media or multi-media including film and television, broadcasting, computer animation, web design and music. They also include a range of other sectors like architecture and urban design, industrial design, designer fashion, writing and publishing."⁶

The size of the creative industries sector is considerable. Cunningham and Higgs introduced the term the creative trident referring to workers:

1. with a cultural profession working in a cultural sector (e.g. an artist in an opera);
2. having a cultural profession but working outside the cultural sector (e.g. a designer in car industry);
3. having a non-cultural profession and working in the cultural sector (e.g. a secretary in a film production company).⁷

As with all university programs, the creative arts and industries within a university discourse define value by viability and employment opportunities. The problem we have in Australia is our relatively small population size as compared to the US, Europe or the UK. Because of this a lot of the responsibility to support the creative arts relies on the federal and state governments and, to a lesser extent, philanthropic foundations. Many creative artists choose to do their practice with minimal financial support, some with the hope in gaining support from government funded authorities such as the Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC), the Australia Council for the Arts, state initiatives, etc. However, without initial government support and investment, the creative industries could suffer the same fate as the Australian car industry. One just has to think of the many TV careers that have been launched by the ABC to see the importance of initial government investment.

Economically, the creative arts are not seen as a contributing economic driver as the creative industries. In 2017 David Throsby's report *Making Art Work* found that in 2014-15 the average income creative artists earned from their creative work was \$18,800.⁸ Because of this many artists have a portfolio of activities where earning an income can range from being freelance, providing a service, being entrepreneurial or managerial, teaching, being on salary, attracting sponsorship, trying one's luck with grant applications and philanthropy or doing other type of work.

The creative arts, like the creative industries, can be a driver in social innovation and entrepreneurship, designing new applications and systems, or providing solutions to challenges

⁵ 2013. *Valuing Australia's Creative Industries*. <https://www.sgsep.com.au/assets/Valuing-Australias-Creative-Industries-Final-Report.pdf> [Accessed 28 Jun. 2019].

⁶ *ibid*

⁷ Cunningham, Stuart D. and Higgs, Peter L. (2008) Creative industries mapping: where have we come from and where are we going? *Creative Industries Journal*, 1(1). pp. 7-30.

⁸ Throsby, David, (2017) *Making Art Work*, Australia Council for the Arts.

<https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/making-art-work-throsby-report-5a05106d0bb69.pdf>

https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/research/entire_document-54325d2a023c8.pdf [Accessed 30 Jun. 2019]

facing the global economy and environment.⁹ However, the pathway or translation from the creative arts to creative industries demands further research to show how this take-up happens.

The complexity of the creative arts and industries nexus was admirably embraced by the ALP's cultural policy in 2013 with its five policy goals. Despite being abandoned with the shift to a conservative government, these goals are relevant today for higher education contexts and the incorporation of diverse creative arts programs.

1. Recognise, respect and celebrate the centrality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures to the uniqueness of Australian identity.
2. Ensure that government support reflects the diversity of Australia and that all citizens, wherever they live, whatever their background or circumstances, have a right to shape our cultural identity and its expression.
3. Support excellence and the special role of artists and their creative collaborators as the source of original work and ideas, including telling Australian stories.
4. Strengthen the capacity of the cultural sector to contribute to national life, community wellbeing and the economy.
5. Ensure Australian creativity thrives here and abroad in the digitally enabled 21st century, by supporting innovation, the development of new creative content, knowledge and creative industries.¹⁰

It is unfortunate that no such policy platform exists today politically, although in section 2, reference is given to the Australia Council for the Arts' strategic policy which has similarities. These five goals identified the important role and value of the creative arts in our society with their acknowledgment of identity, professionalism, wellbeing, innovation, diversity, aesthetics and heritage. However, six years later in an era of program economic viability within the higher education level, the implications of goal 5 seem to overshadow the contributions that the goals 1, 2, 3 and 4.

The attributes of the creative industries discourse (alluded to in goal 5 above) align with the knowledge and digitised economy and their impact. They are collaboration, digitisation, connectivity, accessing markets and audiences, new business models, disruption, entrepreneurship, creativity and intellectual property. The creative industries are excellent for knowledge translation and transfer, although some companies do recognise the importance of research and development and their role in knowledge creation and generation domain.

The dichotomy between creative arts and creative industries can be addressed if the university implemented adaptable structures that capitalised on knowledge creation, generation, translation and transfer. Once knowledge sharing is included in this mix (for example open access or community partnerships) the older value chains in a post digital environment are totally disrupted.¹¹

Provocation 1

One curriculum error in many creative industries programs is treating the creative industries as if it is a discipline.¹² The creative industries consists of specific discipline-based industries

⁹ The United Nations includes the following areas that transcend national boundaries all of which would play into the creative arts activities: children, population, climate change, women's rights, agriculture, family, aging, decolonisation, settlement, health, disability, water. See *Global issues Overview* <http://www.un.org/en/globalissues/>

¹⁰ 2013 Creative Australia, National Cultural policy.

<https://www.nck.pl/upload/attachments/302586/creativeaustraliapdf2.pdf> [Accessed 20 Jun. 2019]

¹¹ Saarti, Jarmo, Tuominen, Kimmo (2017). From Paper-Based towards Post-Digital Scholarly Publishing: An Analysis of An Ideological Dilemma and Its Consequences. *Information Research: An International Electronic Journal*, v22 n3. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1156391> [Accessed Jul 1 2019]

¹² Daniel, Ryan (2017) *The creative industries concept: stakeholder reflections on its relevance and potential in Australia*. *Journal of Australian Studies*, 41 (2).

(music, film, fashion, architecture, etc). Each of these industries has its own industry protocols and standards. Similarly, the creative arts is a cluster referring to a collection of creative based disciplines held together by aesthetics, technical mastery and human expression. These generic approaches can lead to generalisations when curriculum planners try to rationalise core courses with identifying common attributes. It is odd that the same rationalisation is not done in the humanities with the inclusion of a core set of courses that are generic to the humanities or a BA.

2. The value of the creative arts

Before discussing the value of creative arts in higher education, a very brief discussion is needed firstly on the value of the creative arts in general. Value is commonly related to scarcity, demand and supply, however, the UK economist, Mariana Mazzucato, sees value as a process leading towards wealth.¹³ That wealth can be financial gain or knowledge enrichment.

There have been many commissioned reports and papers on the cultural and economic value of the creative arts.¹⁴ Cultural value is a complex and at times nebulous term. Throsby's famous book *Economics and Culture* refers to culture in two ways: 1) "a set of attitudes, beliefs, mores, customs, values and practices which are common to or shared by any group"; and 2) creative activities and their production; the generation and communication of symbolic meaning; and the resultant intellectual property of these activities. Both these definitions comfortably sit within an ideal creative arts/industries higher education agenda. The following quote from the Australia Council for the Arts strategic plan aptly aligns with David Throsby's definition of cultural value.

"The arts have immense public value – from the intrinsic value of human expression, through to broader social, economic and cultural impacts – they are vital for our individual and community wellbeing. The arts contribute to our education, our health, our advancement and our international reputation. The arts give life meaning and Australians are proud of our artists." (Australia Council for the Arts)¹⁵

In the university sector today, the value of a discipline is linked to employability and cost benefit analysis. It is with employability where things become murky and complex regarding the creative arts. Many students enrol into the creative arts for personal reasons, not just financial ones. Also, it can take 5 years or more to see some financial return for those who do want to earn an income. Unfortunately, graduate tracking metrics only look at the immediate (3 months) and median term (3 years) since graduation.¹⁶

The creative artist is no different to the small business owner who on average needs to go into debt before breaking even after about five years. In both examples the crucial factor is knowing who your clients and customers are. In the creative arts, much of this is based on networking which only comes to fruition in time. This is because networking relies on trust, reputation and having a continual presence in the industry area the artist is working in. The key message here, is that it takes time for a creative arts graduate to find their feet both financially and from reputational perspective. This is why "value as a process towards [knowledge or economic] wealth" is so pertinent to understanding the value of a creative arts in higher education.

¹³ Mazzucato, Mariana (2018). *The value of everything*, Allen Lane – Penguin, London.

¹⁴ For example: i) The Bureau of Communications and Arts Research, *Cultural and creative activity in Australia 2008-09 to 2016-17*. Department of Communications and the Arts (2018); ii) Understanding the value of Arts and Culture, the AHRC Cultural value Project (UK) <https://ahrc.ukri.org/documents/publications/cultural-value-project-final-report/> (2016).

¹⁵ The Australia Council for the Arts (2019). <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/about/strategic-plan-and-corporate-plan/>

¹⁶ QILT 2017. Graduate Outcomes Survey – Longitudinal (GOS-L) Medium-term graduate outcomes https://www.qilt.edu.au/docs/default-source/gos-reports/2017-gos-l/2017-gos-l-national-reportbb518791b1e86477b58fff00006709da.pdf?sfvrsn=2bb9e33c_2 [Accessed Jun 25 2019]

Following on from the previous argument for experimentation and irrelevance, I would argue that the value of the creative arts lies primarily in its ability to be independent from any external, innovation or utilitarian agenda in order to experiment and devise new structures and forms, explore new relationships with audiences, and reinvent and invent symbolic practices. Two examples are: 1) the emergence of group devised work in performance in the seventies coincided with or possibly articulated the awareness of collaboration and flat management structures in business; 2) the experimental and avantgarde approaches to form and chance in the 1950s and 60s anticipated the use of multiple narratives in the computer game industry of the turn of this century. The value of the creative industries lies in their ability to monetise creativity and be an economic driver, encourage innovation, create new career paths, combine digitisation with creative outcomes for applied contexts, implement interdisciplinary collaborations and solutions in the creative sector and beyond.

Over the years, various funding policies have resulted with cuts in the creative arts in studio time, removal of small number classes, larger staff/student ratios (currently ranging between 1:21 and 1:26), diminishing casual staff budgets, support services and resources. In some instances, this has led to closure of a program. Universities with creative arts programs have addressed this problem with the rebranding, clustering of programs using the creative industries nomenclature or mergers into larger school structures and rationalising courses by merging them into a delivery that requires minimal staff input.

One can see this particularly in some regional universities with the merging of the creative arts discourse into a creative industries discourse with the argument that creative knowledge can be commercialised and justified within higher education policies linking education with industry. This is not to say that creative arts knowledge cannot be commercialised as the film, music and visual arts industries attest, but it seems that creative arts in regional locations cannot be adequately funded to do what they do really well. Capital city universities will always have a better chance to survive due to having access to a large pool of future students and access to philanthropy. Problems do exist for regional universities with smaller population numbers, having to compete with capital cities, lesser availability of teaching expertise, and smaller industry infrastructures (venues, galleries, theatres, etc).

Provocation 2

While study of the creative industries discourse is essential in our modern economy, new funding and business models are needed in order to avoid the gradual watering down of creative arts which are resource and time intensive. This is not so much of a problem in capital cities which have access to large student pools, sponsorships and philanthropic support. However, it is pertinent in regional contexts where student numbers, access to infrastructures, staff capabilities, industry partnerships can be stretched.

3. The future of work skills

There is widespread international consensus that the future of work will be driven by creativity and innovation. (Australia Council for the Arts 2018)¹⁷

The future of work involves the following competencies:¹⁸

- a) *Sense making*: ability to determine the deeper meaning or significance of what is being expressed. High level thinking and analytical skills.
- b) *Social intelligence*: ability to connect to others in a deep and direct way, to sense and stimulate reactions and desired interactions.

¹⁷ Australia Council for the Arts. (2018). Submission to the select committee on the future of work and workers <https://www.australiacouncil.gov.au/workspace/uploads/files/australia-council-submission-o-5a9a0f55b263e.pdf> [Accessed 1 Jul. 2019]

¹⁸ Institute for the Future, (2011). *Future Work skills 2020*. The University of Phoenix. <http://www.iftf.org/futureworkskills/> [Accessed 1 Jun 2019]

- c) *Novel & adaptive thinking*: proficiency at thinking and coming up with solutions and responses beyond that which is rote or rule-based.
- d) *Cross-cultural competency*: ability to operate in different cultural settings.
- e) *Computational thinking*: ability to translate vast amounts of data into abstract concepts and to understand data-based reasoning.
- f) *New-media literacy*: ability to critically assess and develop content that uses new media forms, and to leverage these media for persuasive communication.
- g) *Transdisciplinarity*: literacy in and ability to understand concepts across multiple disciplines such as modelling and providing solutions to wicked problems.
- h) *Design mindset*: ability to represent and develop tasks and work processes for desired outcomes. Concept Implementation and user interface skills.
- i) *Cognitive load management*: ability to discriminate and filter information for importance, and to understand how to maximize cognitive functioning using a variety of tools and techniques.
- j) *Virtual collaboration*: ability to work productively, drive engagement, and demonstrate presence as a member of a virtual team.

Anyone experienced in the creative arts will recognise that many of its skillsets coincide not only for those of the creative industries workforce, but also for the future workplace in general. The Australia Council for the Arts submission on the future of work writes that:

“Artists are among those who work at the forefront of technological and social change. They have also been among the first to face challenges of digital disruption to business models and income streams. Artists, arts businesses and the public are continuing to experience a range of positive and negative impacts from disruptive technologies, and to adapt the way they engage and make a living.”¹⁹

The implications here are that creative arts practice and digitisation provides insight into future work place scenarios, accessing communities and promotes knowledge sharing. The combination of creative arts practice and digitisation skills may help explain why the boundaries between the creative arts and industries are blurred. There are many examples where creative artists have a rich history in their uptake of new technologies which coexist with more established skill bases. This underpins its regenerative power. From there one can set up research and teaching/learning strategies relevant to all university disciplines in which the creative arts can contribute on an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary level

Provocation 3

The future of work competencies in various combinations can underpin all creative arts courses which can be implemented as part of a compulsory general education program for anyone in a university. This would have enormous implications in the development of creative thinking across all disciplines providing basic work skills essential for the future graduate in any profession.

Sections 4 to 7 apply to both the creative arts and industries. Wherever relevant, special reference is separately given to either.

4. Relevance to industry (an example from music)

An interesting observation I found in my recent ARC research on the music export is that while most higher education music curricula claim to be industry based, readymade pathways are not apparent or absent. In many situations the missing link is having staff who are highly connected and networked with the music industry. I found in my research that many successful musicians and managers in the music industry do not have a dedicated music qualification. It is odd that while we have a university focus in industry relevance, many fulltime academic staff

¹⁹ *ibid*

are not able to maintain networking relationships due to their contractual obligations and having minimal time. As a result, they become distanced from industry networks and are required to produce outputs that have little connection with the needs of the music industry.

Crucial is the inclusion of being entrepreneurial and understanding collaboration. Some programs around the country have modules or courses on industry and management. However, being an arts manager or producer is a 24/7 activity. While it is important for students to be savvy about the industry they choose to work in, create arts programs could do well with the inclusion of creative entrepreneurialism as a major or core activity. Already in some universities, entrepreneurial teams are created involving student artists. But this could go further with the inclusion of a student manager/entrepreneur as part of the program, the provision of a budget with the expectation that the project produces a return, and access to digital marketing resources (students, common resources). The teams would participate in international industry fora, engage with on line distributors, media and aggregators to promote their creative work. In this way, curricula become export savvy providing students with a stepping stone into the real world of the creative industries. In today's millennial world, students drive the program; staff would facilitate thereby creating a partnership between the two.²⁰ These collaborative partnerships can seriously and excitingly challenge traditional teacher student power transactions.

A professional career in the arts requires 24/7 consistency, repeated attendance at international industry events, promotion, digital marketing strategies, international touring or travel to events, and most importantly, networking. Casual academic staff from the industry are able to provide this connection, although this is dependent on the size of the casual budget and carefully implemented academic/casual staff mentor program.

Provocation 4

Serious change requires changing governance, embracing new industry business models, and not confusing contemporary practice with industry engagement. The recent Engagement and Impact strategy is a step in the right direction to ameliorate this problem. Solutions can be found with an embedded work integrated learning strategy in which the program is an active player in the industry. This requires a more fluid dialogue, engagement and shared commonalities between academic staff and industry, highly flexible working conditions, re-evaluation of assessments, course content and a peer review/evaluation process in partnership with industry that goes beyond the industry advisory group's as required by TEQSA.²¹

5. The 'Born Global' student: creative arts in a post-digital and globalised world

Section 4 suggests that creative arts/industries programs could disrupt traditional linear value chains (creation → production → marketing → distribution → retail) where content creation, production and distribution are aggregated (verticalized) via the internet. No longer would students enrol at the university hoping that there may be an opportunity to further their careers after graduation. They instead are immediately immersed in an environment focussing on real world simulations, work integrated and experiential learning, and internationalisation through digitisation. Such are the implications of being **born global**.²² Because of digitisation and the internet, a born global economy enables businesses to access multiple international markets at the same time without the need for the traditional strategy of developing a local market first. The You tube rock star phenomenon is an example of this.

²⁰ The Higher Education Academy 2014. *Engagement through partnership: students as partners in learning and teaching in higher education*.

https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/resources/engagement_through_partnership.pdf

²¹ Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/>

²² Skene, D 2017. 'Born Global firms - a growing feature of Australia's internationally active business community'. Canberra: Australian Trade and Investment Commission.

In a digitised world there are ways to challenge the capital city dominance mentioned in section 2 where capital city universities are major competitors with an advantage. The creative arts and the creative industries today are global. However, students will come to a university, no matter where it is located, if they know their aspirations will be met and furthered. Being in a digital world, the new performance/exhibition platform (or frame) is the internet, streaming, social media platforms, videos on Instagram, mobile phone screens, YouTube, etc. Connectivity to the internet means instant internationalisation making students born global.

For the student, born global necessitates digital and cultural literacies, and having creative content digitally available through streaming, ePortfolios, and being very connected to your international audience or customer base. As well as discipline skill development, student centred learning through content creation and promotion become the prime driver for all courses. Across all disciplines, content creation is the merging growth area in the creative industries. Many programs have resources and capabilities to create, support, develop and distribute new content.

A born global delivery means that digital management of content, networking, and international distribution become part of the course offerings. The linking of student generated content to a digital distribution strategy means that students (and staff) become export focussed. In this way, creative arts/industry programs based anywhere in Australia (regional and capital cities) are a doorway to the world, linked to export strategies, on line platforms, international industry stakeholder events, and where a 'deal' is a realistic possibility. This network approach coincides with Networked Participatory Scholarship (NPS) which involves the distribution and sharing of ideas and artefacts via digital networks and rewards individual "connection, collaboration, and curation (Stewart 2015).²⁴ Students are developing an international profile via their ePortfolios, utilising digital aggregators and being academically credited for their creative pursuits.

A creative arts/industries program that capitalises on being born global has the potential for students and staff to export and develop an international profile *while studying*. They instantly become part of the industry. This means that participation in export markets and industry showcases must be factored into curriculum design. Although it must be acknowledged that some theatre and film programs have been doing this for quite some time and before the internet revolution.

Provocation 5

In a born global environment, tertiary programs need to adopt the business models currently being used in the creative industries. These new business models are based on shared economies and new technologies. In this way, the programs are the industry where the boundaries between audience and artist are blurred. For this to happen, there must be up to date awareness of new technologies and their impact on new business models and users, as can be seen with the use of game industry attributes such as interactivity and artificial intelligence.

6. The role of risk

A career in the creative arts reflects the 'boundaryless career'²⁵ where professionals are unpredictable, no longer tied to any one organisation, able to manage their own career paths, be highly mobile and invest considerably in professional networks.²⁶

²⁴ Stewart, Bonnie E. (2015). In *Abundance: Networked Participatory Practices as Scholarship International Review of Research in Open and Distributed Learning*, v16 n3 p318-340.

<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1067935>

²⁵ Arthur M. and Rousseau D. (1996). *The boundaryless career: A new employment principle for a new organizational era*. Oxford University Press.

²⁶ Zwaan, K., ter Bogt, T. and Raaijmakers, Q. (2010). Career trajectories of Dutch pop musicians: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour* 77(1), 10-20.

Irrespective of whether we call it the creative arts or industries within the university, creative practice within the safety of a university environment must be about risk taking. Learning in the creative arts stems from risk taking whether it is a technical or physiological risk, working with new materials, seeking out collaborations, or proposing a new conceptual framework. It cannot be tied down to neoliberal discourses and environments based on risk aversion. However, industry collaborations and risk taking can be done. For this to happen it needs a curriculum that teaches entrepreneurialism, collaboration skills, risk implementation and its management, simulated or work integrated learning environments applicable to the area the artist wishes to work in.

If the university sector wants to have a creative arts dimension that can inform the creative industries then it must let it do what it does best: take risks, be “irrelevant”, challenge, create experiences, learn from mistakes more than once, make wild and rational propositions and redefine the status quo. Some universities have acknowledged this with the implementation of a creative arts program complemented with a creative industries program. Unfortunately, in a risk aversion environment and the fear of litigation, risk taking (calculated or naïve) is an early casualty resulting with the stifling of creativity.

In his key work *Risk Society*, Ulrich Beck²⁷ states that the breakdown of modern institutions has produced a shift in trust. This results in the individual having to make more choices, and better manage the unknown. But what would the teaching of risk involve? There have been many studies on entrepreneurship. The creative entrepreneur has the following attributes: trust, the ability to network, communication skills, financial savviness, managing uncertainty, collaboration skills and intuition.²⁸

With assessments and benchmarking becoming more standardised, students (and many staff) are becoming risk averse. They will only do what is assessable and expect to be taught the steps towards achieving high grades according to clearly defined criteria. Risk taking is removed from the picture although I have once seen a marking rubric that gives a mark for risk taking (whatever that means considering it wasn't part of the course content). For this to happen, staff must also need to know how to manage and teach students the role and importance of risk. From the start of a program, critical self-reflection post assessment can be given equal weighting with the assessment itself. This creates a feedback-loop model of learning which can reward risk taking

Provocation 6

Risk management can be (and in some instances is being) taught through establishing team based learning from the start of students' study; carefully monitored WIL activities that gradually increase levels of responsibility over the lifetime of a program; group devised projects, more self-assessment, problem solving activities, understanding improvisation and other open processes for content creation, and linking creative practice with bodies of knowledge. From a conceptual perspective, the creative arts/industries provides a conducive environment for the understanding and management of risk.

7. Conclusion

Whenever there have been seismic shifts through technological, cultural and scientific change, creative artists have always been active participants. This was so even before the term creative industries was coined. The art making from early Modernism or post WW2 (1950-60s) are just two examples of these interactions. Never has there been a need for creative practice to engage with our post-digital age. Lovejoy, Paul and Vesna's book *Context Providers* (2011) discusses

²⁷ Beck, Ulrich (1992), *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity*. Sage.

²⁸ Gifford, S. (2003). Risk and Uncertainty. In Zoltán J. Ács & Audretsch, D.B. (Eds.) Handbook of entrepreneurship research: An interdisciplinary survey and introduction. Springer Science & Business Media.

contemporary examples with an emphasis on visual arts in a post-digital age.²⁹ Around the world creative artists are using their skills to remove the boundaries between creative arts practice and the creative industries. These include:

- i) engaging with global challenges;
- ii) addressing the exciting capabilities or cultural implications of technological change;
- iii) collaborating with researchers in science, health or IT such as the Arts at Cern program in Switzerland;
- iv) collaborating with start-ups; or
- v) creating new aesthetic experiences.

These are crucial themes for a future involving the creative arts and industries and the generation of new knowledge. They neatly follow on from earlier pioneering work by US artist and researcher Stephen Wilson who documents the emerging role the arts are forging in collaboration with information technologies and the sciences.³⁰ Wilson identified the following areas which show how the arts can contribute to and collaborate on an innovation agenda. They are:

- i) transdisciplinary discovery research;
- ii) ethical and cultural considerations of living in a post-digital age;
- iii) designed outputs for a particular purpose; and
- iv) aesthetic outputs using new technologies.

Clearly, we are seeing a new emerging role for creative practitioners being articulated within the higher education and research environments. The creative arts is a dynamic and living entity that has always been ready to celebrate play; take up new technologies; reject out of date practices; embrace risks, new ideas and new modes of communications. Universities could greatly benefit from this dynamism, and volatility, by establishing strategies, policies and/or funding models applicable to location, digital domains and demographics. However, this can only happen once the creative arts are unbundled from an older hegemonic creative industries discourse and be recognised for what it can separately offer higher education and the generation of new knowledge and experiences.

Finally, the creative arts, in being the ultimate symbol of creativity are always in process, innovating and inventing new ways of understanding. It is up to university policy makers to:

- 1) embrace the implications of a creative arts ethos and be at the forefront of institutional risk-taking; and
- 2) implement a strategy that takes advantage and embraces the complex relationship between the creative arts and industries.

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²⁹ Lovejoy, M. Paul, C. & Vesna, V.[eds] (2011). *Context Providers: Conditions of Meaning in the Media Arts*, , Intellect Press, UK / University of Chicago Press..

³⁰ Wilson, Stephen (2002) *Information Arts*, MIT.