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“Right now, being an artist means being a rock star. It’s not anymore about the spirit of the art what Kandinsky taught in the early 1920s. It’s not anymore about being an artist for the community like it was in the 60s. Right now, it’s about career. It’s about competition” (personal interview, painter/musician/graphic designer, 12/05).

This research set out to detect reasons and motivations for intra-metropolitan creative industries cluster development. However, it soon became apparent within the participant observation process and the 200 personal interviews that cluster developments in the selected case study areas implicate different dynamics than what general cluster theory can account for. Cluster development is neither driven by the production of a collective product nor is it based on traded interdependencies along a common value-chain. The interviewees stated that neither the intra-metropolitan clusters nor Berlin and New York City as metropolitan creative industries clusters posses a current creative signature, collective innovation or an identifiable school of creative expression beyond the general
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idea of creativity. Even untraded interdependencies rarely come in the form of sharing knowledge and information about labor markets, business developments or inspiration and creative enhancement. Overall, what drives intra-metropolitan creative industries cluster development in the case study areas is the idea of attention and differentiation from other intra-metropolitan creative industries locations as well as the involvement of urban growth coalitions in network and identity formation processes as a tool for urban re-imagination and revitalization.

At the beginning of this dissertation, I claimed that cluster origins and development need to be reworked and to take into account the entrepreneur while focusing less on “carrying” capacities (Braunerhjelm and Feldman 2006). Chapter 6 then presented four examples of such capacities in the form of incubators that aim to foster cluster development although with different strategies and motivations. Whilst the Berlin examples designpool.berlin and Christiania focus on network formation, nyDESIGNS appeals to entrepreneurship and The Point to neighborhood development. However, their impacts on creative industries cluster formation in the case study neighborhoods are comparatively minor compared to the influence urban growth coalitions and their creative industries-led revitalization schemes have on the eventual formation of intra-metropolitan creative industries clusters. Overall, cluster formation in the case study areas is driven by a combination of entrepreneurial strategies and an urban development policy that takes advantage of specific business needs like the dependence on visitorship and geographic origin reputations. It is based on an attempt to gain entrepreneurial advantages through the creation of location-based images and identities associated with “new,” “cutting-edge,” “different,” “exotic,” “sexy” etc. that develop the area into “the place to be” (Braunerhjelm and Feldman 2006: 4). Geographical reputations that are perceived as “different” attract other creative companies, visitors, and customers as well as possess symbols that may revalue local businesses and their products. In the case study neighborhoods, the evolutionary diffusion of knowledge inherited in clusters has less to do with any creative forms of expression or innovative artistic techniques and more to do with the realization of the interviewed creative entrepreneurs who drive cluster development that in order to be successful, their location also needs to be perceived as successful. Above all, the observed network formation process are not
mainly relationships of direct exchange, but rather are marketing tools geared toward the popularization of the respective site.

THE NEW BRIDGE AND TUNNEL CROWD

Location decisions are influenced by numerous factors. As most of the interviewed creative entrepreneurs came originally from outside Berlin or New York City, their location decisions were primarily based on being in the particular cities of Berlin or New York City. Only later did they decide to locate within the specific case study neighborhoods. While the decisions to move to the respective metropolitan areas were usually determined by the perception of being in a thriving center of creative activity, to locate in the particular case study neighborhoods was mainly a financial decision. Once on site, the interviewed creative entrepreneurs described two different relationships to their location. They either perceived themselves as part of the metropolitan creative economy having little to no interaction with their environment, or they felt isolated from the larger creative industries networks and therefore started to formulate and engage in local relationships in order to profit from the benefits of being part of an intra-metropolitan creative industries clusters. The studied new intra-metropolitan creative industries clusters developed due to the inability of some creative entrepreneurs to break into and make their mark in the established networks and agglomerations. In this way, they are developments of virtue out of necessity.

More than a definite strategy or an accidental formation, for many interviewed creative entrepreneurs cluster formation “is the philosophical concept added to your financial situation” (personal interview, dancer, 03/06). For the front-runners of local network formation moving to Friedrichshain, Long Island City, Wedding, or the South Bronx was not an escape from the pressures of a highly competitive creative industries environment in Manhattan or Mitte. The “new bridge and tunnel crowd” (Cotter 2005) did not seek isolation in the respected case study areas like their predecessors but rather the opposite. Unable to locate in established creative industries location within Berlin or New York City, they moved to areas that are very close to the desired sites but with less pressures from real estate markets. However, the aspiration of many interviewed creative