



# CREATIVITY AND TOURISM

## The State of the Art

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**Abstract:** The rapidly developing relationship between tourism and creativity, arguably heralds a 'creative turn' in tourism studies. Creativity has been employed to transform traditional cultural tourism, shifting from tangible heritage towards more intangible culture and greater involvement with the everyday life of the destination. The emergence of 'creative tourism' reflects the growing integration between tourism and different placemaking strategies, including promotion of the creative industries, creative cities and the 'creative class'. Creative tourism is also arguably an escape route from the serial reproduction of mass cultural tourism, offering more flexible and authentic experiences which can be co-created between host and tourist. However the gathering critique also highlights the potential dangers of creative hype and commodification of everyday life. **Keywords:** creative tourism, creativity, cultural tourism, creative industries, creative clusters. © 2011 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

### INTRODUCTION

Creativity is 'in'; it is not just 'hot', but also 'cool'. Creative cities, the creative industries, creative districts, and creative individuals jostle for the attention of policy-makers, the media and the 'creative class' in general. People seem increasingly keen to develop their creative potential, by enhancing their productive or consumption skills, by following courses or experiencing creativity on holiday. Creativity is arguably not just an end in itself, but also a means to develop distinction, economic spin-off and authenticity (Zukin, 2010).

Not surprisingly, tourism has also been caught up in this creative maelstrom. In recent studies of urban economies, tourism is often listed as one of the creative industries, and 'creative tourism' has been taken up by many destinations around the globe. Creative tourism has been posed as an extension of cultural tourism—at once an adjunct and an antidote to mass forms of cultural tourism and the serial reproduction of culture (Richards & Wilson, 2006).

This review article attempts to analyze and explain the developing relationship between tourism and creativity, specifically considering

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the implications of the ‘creative turn’ in tourism and examining the ways in which relationship has been approached in tourism studies and more general social science literature. It deals with the drivers of creativity in tourism both in terms of production and consumption, evolving intervention strategies, the development of creative practices in tourism and the rise of creative tourism as a distinct field of tourism development. The gathering critique of creativity is also reviewed, and the potential dangers of the creative colonization of everyday life are outlined.

## WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

One of the major problems with creativity is definition. Klausen (2010) notes that “the standard definition of creativity is problematic and maybe in an even worse state than is generally acknowledged by creativity researchers themselves” (p. 347) and Scott (2010, pp. 155–116) remarks “in view of its current vogue, the term calls urgently for substantive clarification.” The lack of a single widely-accepted definition of creativity is arguably due to the wide range of views on function of creativity (Robinson, 2008). Taylor (1988) reviews the multitude of definitions of creativity in the literature, and groups the general scientific approaches into four main areas, which correspond to the ‘4Ps’ of creativity (Rhodes, 1961):

- The creative person
- The creative process
- The creative product
- The creative environment (‘creative press’)

The practice of tourism currently involves all four of these approaches, for example in the use of the creative environment through visits to creative clusters, the use of creative products as tourism attractions (e.g. travel related to famous authors, painters, etc.), the utilization of the creative process in designing creative activities for tourists (e.g. workshops and masterclasses) and the involvement of creative people through the activities of the ‘creative class’ (Florida, 2002).

Creativity was historically associated with the creative person, although Amabile (1996) suggested that in recent decades creativity research has increasingly tended to highlight the creative product. The contemporary emphasis seems to have shifted again, both towards the social context and the broader environment of creativity. Scott (2010) argues that socially embedded creativity implies much more than the activities of gifted individuals or members of the “creative class”. Socially embedded interpretations of creativity have also been obvious in tourism, where an initial lack of attention for creative activities or policies has been replaced by a growing number of studies

that underline the interwoven nature of culture, creativity and tourism (e.g. Frey, 2009).

Broadening notions of creativity reflect a general ‘creative turn’ in society, which can also be identified in many different social and academic fields, including literature, urban development, cultural policy, economy, aesthetics, academic writing, theater, architecture and education. Richards and Wilson (2007) argue that the ‘creative turn’ in the social sciences developed out of the earlier ‘cultural turn’ as broadening notions of ‘culture’ began to undermine the explanatory power of the term, and as ‘culture’ itself waned in terms of its ability to generate distinction for social groups, economic classes and places. This development follows the general de-differentiation of culture and economy and different spheres of life (Jelinčić, 2009). These processes have also led to tourism and creativity becoming increasingly integrated on a number of levels. As Andersson and Thomsen (2008, p. 42) argue, “the new integration of culture and business and hence the experience economy are central elements expressing the ‘creative’ turn where culture becomes an instrument for growth and development”. Tourism is in turn one of the major carriers of economic growth in the field of culture and creativity.

The turn towards creativity can therefore be seen not just as a general trend affecting a range of academic disciplines, but also as a broader instrumentalization of culture and creativity. Creativity has become a strategy to be followed by cities and regions in a search for growth, as well as a strategy from promoting innovation and individual skill development (Ray, 1998). All of these changes can in turn be linked to broader processes of globalization, commodification, rising competition between cities and regions and the development of the knowledge or network economy (Mommaas, 2009a).

The creative turn has therefore affected tourism in a number of ways. As well as increased creative content being integrated into tourism products, tourism has itself become a creative arena for the development of skills and performance. As Cloke (2006, p. 105) points out, the creative performative role in tourism can extend to many areas not traditionally seen as creative, such as bungee jumping: “A kind of performativity in which although the actual process is staged, nevertheless the unfolding event is entirely immanent, and resistant to representational signification”. The point is that even something so apparently mechanistic and staged as bungee jumping can become ‘creative’ through the way in which it is experienced and reacted to by the participants. In essence we are seeing the development of tourism as an increasingly creative and ludic environment, within which new practices can be developed which challenge current representations of space.

The rise of creativity as an individual and social phenomenon has been stimulated by processes related to both production and consumption, which are considered in the following section.

## PRODUCTION, CONSUMPTION AND CREATIVITY

In the field of leisure and tourism, production and consumption are increasingly becoming integrated as the barriers between work and leisure, and between different economic sectors become vaguer (Gospodini, 2007):

Cultural and leisure production and consumption (of arts, fashion, music, food, tourism), creative industries of technology-intensive and knowledge-rich enterprises containing design (in architecture, fashion, graphics, internet, etc), new media and Information and Communication Technologies have become the growth engine of the post-industrial city (p. 11).

Developing practices of production and consumption are at the forefront of the creative turn, with a symbiotic relationship between a productive drive towards developing new experiences and consumer desires for new sources of ‘fun’ and distinction (Pantzar & Shove, 2005).

In terms of production, the rise of creativity is often linked to the development of the ‘experience economy’ (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Poulsson & Kale, 2004), in which growing competition arguably leads producers to add value to services by developing ‘experiences’. Tourism became an important driver of this process, with the development of specific experience environments and the repackaging of a range of tourist services as ‘experiences’. As the experience economy leaned heavily on the development of themed and staged experiences, the importance of symbolic production (Lash & Urry, 1994) and the role of the ‘creative industries’ as a major source of symbolic content for tourism became more obvious. Tourism has become part of the cultural or symbolic economy, as Gibson and Kong (2005) note:

many sectors (including industries such as furniture and industrial design, certain forms of niche food production and tourism) may now be viewed as part of the cultural economy because of their symbolic content, when they were at best only peripherally considered part of ‘the arts’ previously (p. 543).

Commentators on the rise of the symbolic economy, including Zukin (1995) and Hannigan (1998) have pointed to the leading role of tourism, media and entertainment in symbolic production. “Cultural strategies of redevelopment are complicated representations of change and desire. Their common element is to create a ‘cultural’ space connecting tourism, consumption and style of life” (Zukin, 1995, p. 83).

The creative development of tourism production also stems from the nature of tourism itself. As with many other service industries growing competition forces enterprises to move up the value chain, evolving new sources of value (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). This process has also been evident in cultural tourism, where the increasing supply of cultural products has in many cases outstripped demand (Richards, 1996), increasing competition and driving a search for alternative models. As Russo (2002) has pointed out, cultural tourism has become

subject to a vicious cycle of overdevelopment, reducing returns and lack of investment, which has undermined the value of cultural tourism for many destinations. One response has been a shift from cultural tourism towards creative tourism and creative development strategies (D'Auria, 2009), thereby arguably producing more flexible and innovative forms of tourism experience which are harder to copy or imitate than mere services (Alvarez, 2010).

The shift towards creative production has also been stimulated by the increased attractiveness of creative occupations. As McRobbie (2007) has argued in the case of the United Kingdom, the creative sector is increasingly characterized by precarious forms of labor which are sustained by a belief in the 'one hit wonder' which will deliver riches and fame. The creative industries can therefore count on a significant pool of part-time and casual workers, many of whom will try and increase their career prospects by building their creative networks, attending parties and events in creative and cultural locations which attract other would be creative stars (Currid, 2007). Artists are also often seen as the pioneers of urban regeneration. As Zukin (2010) has shown in the case of New York, artists are often the first to move into rundown neighborhoods in search of cheap space, kick-starting a gentrification process which eventually leads to upgrading of the area and the growth of tourism.

A number of trends in the field of consumption also point to an increasingly important role for creativity in tourism. Among the key consumption trends linked by Richards and Wilson (2006) to the rise of creativity are:

- Dissatisfaction with contemporary modes of consumption
- Blurring boundaries between work and leisure (serious leisure, work as play, lifestyle entrepreneurship)
- Increased desire for self-development and skilled consumption
- Experience hunger of postmodern consumers
- Building narrative, biography and identity
- Attractiveness of creativity as a form of expression

In essence, many of these trends stem from the development of a postmodern, postmaterialist society, where consumption becomes an underpinning for particular lifestyles and identities. People therefore increasingly distinguish themselves in terms of what they consume and particularly through the symbolic values attached to their consumption practices (Bourdieu, 1984; Wynne, 1998). As Collins (2004) notes, these practices in turn become established social rituals, which help to create new symbols of identification.

Consumption skills therefore become vital to navigating the postmodern landscape. Skilled consumption not only allows people to develop distinctive identities through lifestyle enhancement, but it also leads to more creative use of tourism resources (Richards, 1996; Russo & Aria Sans, 2007). Consumption skills are usually honed during leisure time, for example in the development of hobbies (Jelinčić,

2009) but can also become a means of generating work and economic capital, as in the case of ‘lifestyle entrepreneurs’ (Peters, Frehse, & Buhalis, 2009). Creative skills are widely used as the basis for small-scale tourism business, for example in the provision of painting or photography holidays, gastronomic experiences and spiritual or ‘holistic’ holidays (Smith & Puczko, 2008). The development of such lifestyle businesses are arguably one of the main drivers of creative tourism development (Richards & Wilson, 2007).

As Amin and Thrift (2002, p. 125) have noted, there is a tendency for such consumption practices to be enlisted into economic and development strategies by cities and regions, where “the impact of the imagination and fantasy becomes a major part of the conduct of business, to be traded on and turned into profit”. Production and consumption factors are thereby increasingly entwined. Crewe and Beverstock (1998) point to the fact that places increasingly distinguish themselves through their ‘consumptional identities’, or the reconstruction of places as centers of consumption, through the manipulation of culture and creative resources.

## CREATING DISTINCTIVE PLACES

Creative resources are now regularly employed to generate more distinctive identities, offering regions and cities a symbolic edge in an increasingly crowded marketplace. The emphasis in such strategies has also shifted from tangible to intangible cultural resources because more places lacking a rich built heritage are now competing for tourism business (Richards & Wilson, 2007). Such processes lie behind the attempt of many cities and regions to make themselves more distinctive. Turok (2009) has argued that cities need to adjust their image more rapidly in global markets and therefore they rely less on changes in their occupational or industrial structure, and more on branding for their distinctiveness. Evans (2003) has also suggested that forms of branding based on cultural and creative resources are crucial for the competitive position of cities and regions. The reliance on lifestyle, ‘soft’ locational factors, branding and image places more reliance on leisure and tourism as key resources in distinction strategies (Jackson & Murphy, 2006), so that place adds value to the cultural economy in general, “as a stockpile of knowledge, traditions, memories and images” (Scott, 2010, p. 123).

This is part of a broader shift from comparative to competitive advantage in destination competitiveness, as noted in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) report on the *Impact of Culture on Tourism* (2009). This report emphasized that comparative advantage is derived largely from endowed resources, such as cultural heritage, while competitive advantage relies more on resource deployment (in other words, creativity in managing and marketing the destination). The ability of a tourism destination to compete therefore depends on “its ability to transform the basic inherited factors into created assets with a higher symbolic or sign value” and that

“organizational capacities allow some regions to make better use of their inherited and created assets to make themselves attractive to tourists” (OECD, 2009, pp. 29–30).

The creative turn in public policy was perhaps most notable in the United Kingdom in the 90s, when the Labour government made creativity “one of the most ubiquitous policy terms not only within cultural policy discussions but also in the overall spectrum of public policies including education and economy” (Neelands & Choe, 2008). The development of ‘cool Britannia’ was sold not just in economic, but also social terms. According to Smith (1998, p. 144), “the great thing about creativity” is that “it lends itself to a democracy of involvement”: every individual has creative potential and is entitled to enjoy creative and cultural activities. The fact that creativity was seen as having social and economic outcomes made it useful for the Labour Government’s ‘third way’ approach to reconciling market and society. Such ideas were also taken up in other parts of the world, including Australia (Commonwealth Government, 1994) Singapore (Ooi, 2006), and South Africa (Rogerson, 2007).

Creativity is therefore attractive as a policy option for stimulating a range of economic, cultural and social outcomes. It is also attractive because of the argued advantages produced by networking and knowledge spillover which stimulate further creative activity. Public sector intervention in creative development has basically involved three approaches (Campbell, 2011):

- Creative Industries
- Creative Cities
- Creative Class

In broad terms, creative industries strategies aim to stimulate the development of creative production through support for the ‘creative industries’ sector, which is broadly defined to include advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, software, toys and games, TV and radio, and video games (DCMS, 1998). In some cases the definition of creative industries has been broadened to include tourism (Bagwell, 2009; Bonink & Hitters, 2001; Evans, 2009).

The creative cities approach has been championed by Charles Landry (2000), who argued that a broader approach to creativity was required to solve urban problems, involving the development of creative production and new governance systems to allow creativity to flourish in society as a whole. Creative city strategies are founded on the idea that creativity can be fostered or steered (Lange, Kalandides, Stober, & Mieg, 2008) not just in the creative industries, but among citizens in general (Sepe, 2010) in order to be ‘creative for the world’ (Landry, 2006).

The ‘creative class’ approach popularized by Richard Florida (2002) is based on the idea that there is a growing number of people engaged in creative occupations who are attracted to places because of their

creative ‘atmosphere’. By attracting the creative class, the argument goes; a city can stimulate economic activity and improve their image. However, the creative ‘atmosphere’ of a place is very difficult to define, and may not be very helpful in terms of explaining the location decisions of creative people, or the arrival of tourists. (Richards, 2001).

These three approaches therefore have different emphases in terms of creativity; stimulating a specific industry sector, developing the creative potential of the whole city, or attracting a specific group of producers and consumers. Where all three approaches come together is in the development of cultural or creative clusters, which as Flew (2005) notes are a more direct attempt to manage space to promote and develop creativity. The creative industries approach leans heavily on traditional economic theory about the effects of production clustering (Porter, 1998), but the tendency for the creative class to congregate in particular places with a creative ‘atmosphere’ has also been stressed by Florida (2002). Creative city strategies also tend to be organized around specific ‘creative clusters’ (Evans, 2009), creative precincts (Hee, Schroepfer, Nanxi, & Ze, 2009) or ethnic enclaves (Shaw, 2007). These creative ‘hot-spots’ are often argued to stimulate the development of the creative industries as well as acting as a magnet for the consumption power of the creative class and tourists.

As Mommaas (2004) explains, such ‘cultural-creative clusters’ are designed to produce a range of outcomes, including

- Strengthening the Identity, Attraction Power and Market Position of Places
- Stimulating a More ‘Entrepreneurial’ Approach to the Arts and Culture
- Stimulating Innovation and Creativity
- Finding a New Use for Old Buildings and Derelict Sites
- Stimulating Cultural Diversity and Cultural Democracy

Creative clusters therefore have an important role in building the local creative economy, as well as attracting tourists and adding to the attractiveness of places. This wide range of roles underlines the broadening scope of creativity, and the gradual shifting from a narrow to a broader view of creativity: ‘In the cognitive-cultural economy of the twenty-first century the entire city or region is implicated in processes of learning, creativity and innovation.’ (Scott, 2010, pp. 126–127). However, the very existence of creative clusters also underlines the fact that places with particular endowed advantages may often be best placed to take advantage of the creative economy. In the case of many creative clusters the old industrial fabric developed on the basis of specific endowed resources provides the space required to develop new creative activities. Cities such as London, or Rotterdam or Shanghai, once at the forefront of the old industrial economy are now also at the forefront of the creative economy, at least in part because of their plentiful supply of rehabilitated ‘creative spaces’.

## THE PRACTICE OF CREATIVITY, TOURISM AND EVERYDAY LIFE

Another area of convergence between creativity and tourism lies in their important grounding in everyday life. The role of ‘everyday creativity’ has become increasingly important with the rise of popular culture (Fiske, 1989) and more recently new media, the Internet and social networking (Burgess, Foth, & Klaebe, 2006). A similar shift has taken place in tourism, where recent research on cultural and creative tourism has challenged the view of tourism as an activity removed from everyday life. The idea of tourism as a ‘special time’ (Edensor, 2007) has deep roots in the tourism literature. For example Graburn (1989) posited tourism as an escape from everyday life and MacCannell (1976) argued that tourism permits our ‘everyday masks’ to be discarded, offering opportunities to explore different identities and take on ‘new’ roles. In his work on the tourist gaze, Urry (1995) also emphasized the extraordinary nature of tourism:

The gaze is directed to features of landscape and townscape which separate them off from everyday and routine experiences. Such aspects are viewed because they are taken to be in some sense out-of-the-ordinary (p. 132).

However, the practice of tourism has over the past two decades arguably evolved from a predominantly passive gaze to encompass more active forms of involvement by tourists in the everyday life of destinations. As exotic, long haul tourism destinations have become more commonplace in a world shrunk by globalization, the extraordinary has become harder to find in traditional forms of tourism consumption. Edensor (2001) notes that:

The breaking down of separate areas of social life, . . . means that we can be tourists in our everyday travels, whether actual or virtual. And the fragmentation of tourist specialisms into niche markets entails a proliferation of stages, activities and identities. The growing social and economic importance of leisure and a blurring between work and leisure in post-Fordist economies further obscures the distinction between tourism and the everyday (p. 61).

Stylianou-Lambert (2011) has argued that contemporary cultural tourism is now more an extension of everyday life than a contrast to it. She found that even though cultural tourists may adopt a tourist gaze during travel, they do not abandon other gazes or perceptual ‘filters’ carried from home. By stepping outside the confines of the tourist gaze, cultural and creative tourists are engaging their creative skills to develop new relationships with the everyday life of the destination. As Maitland (2007, 2010) argues in the case of ‘new tourism areas’ in London, and Russo and Aria Sans (2007, 2009) describe in the case of student areas in Venice, which they argue are shifting the “unreflexive relation between gazers and place, towards a more sustainable engagement of visitors in creative production and consumption” (2009, p. 161).

In their search for creative material, tourists increasingly seek out ‘alternative public spaces’ (Nielsen, 2002) or the ‘heterogeneous

spaces' that Edensor (2000) contrasts with enclavic, or highly controlled and scripted tourist spaces. In heterogeneous spaces 'transitional identities may be sought and performed alongside the everyday enactments of residents, bypassers, and workers.' (p. 333).

In these unscripted situations it is difficult to transfer creative knowledge in formalized ways between tourists and locals. Instead there is raft of platforms designed to provide the creative knowledge to 'be a local' ([www.bealocal.com](http://www.bealocal.com)) or engage in locally-based forms of creativity, such as the Tours by Locals ([toursbylocals.com](http://toursbylocals.com)), the Dine with the Dutch program ([www.dinewiththedutch.com](http://www.dinewiththedutch.com)) or city guides delivered via smartphones or hotels guides provided on Second Life (Binkhorst, den Dekker, & Melkert, 2010). The growth of Tourist Created Content (TCC) in all forms of media has provided an immense creative resource for tourists in recent years (Munar, 2011).

In the world of tacit knowledge made available via the Internet, tourists can increasingly be viewed as the crafters of their own experience, as Richard Sennett suggests in *The Craftsman* (2008). Sennett argues that craft skills have not vanished but rather migrated to new areas, such as the production of open source software. Craft, he argues is a form of social capital: tacit knowledge and skill accumulated over time and passed on through social interaction. Tacit knowledge is not only more difficult to transfer, arguably also more difficult to commodify, as it resides in the skilled person that possesses it. The embeddedness of creative knowledge and skills is one of the arguments for developing creative tourism. As Cohendet, Grandadama, and Simon (2010) argue in the case of the 'creative city', knowledge transfer takes place within defined circuits between different groups and 'scenes' in the creative sector. One of the essential requirements of this system is physical spaces where people can meet and validate new cultural forms, or 'playgrounds of creativity' such as cafes, squares, museum foyers. These are also the new spaces that are often so attractive to tourists.

The interplay of producers and consumers in the development of creative practices is underlined by Hartley (2007) and Potts, Cunningham, Hartley, and Ormerod (2008). Instead of traditional value chains that run from producer to commodity to consumer, there are increasingly links between agents (who may be individuals or firms, who originate ideas), social networks, both real and virtual (adoption) and market-based enterprise, organizations and coordinating institutions who organize retention. The development of such 'social network markets' is also envisaged in the succession of different generations of experiences by Boswijk, Thijssen, and Peelen (2007). They argue that the producer-oriented first generation experiences described by Pine and Gilmore (1999) have been succeeded by second generation experiences based on co-creation between consumer and producer and more recently by third generation communities of producers and consumers in which the distinctions between the two roles effectively disappear.

The conception of creativity as a practice which unites consumers and producers in the ludic construction of space is illustrated by the analysis of flamenco tourism in Seville by Aoyama (2009, p. 98). Seville

has flamenco schools that also cater to tourists, providing them with the creative skills necessary to knowledgeably consume flamenco, and travel agents in the city specialize in packaging flamenco products. The provision of services related purely to performance and spectacle (often aimed at cultural tourists) is mainly restricted to the city centre area close to hotels and restaurants. More production-related activities, such as flamenco schools, are found in the historic neighborhoods further from the centre. Creative tourists wishing to learn flamenco are therefore forced to penetrate the everyday fabric of the city in their search for authentic flamenco skills, while the performance spaces in the city centre provide the revenue needed to keep the artform alive:

Flamenco might not have survived if it were not for the multiple and overlapping attempts to develop a site of staged authenticity by businesses, artists and the state, and to cater to the broader, international audience. Tourism is a co-producer of the flamenco industry, and its survival hinges upon successful staging of authenticity (p. 100).

## CREATIVITY IN TOURISM

The trajectory of creativity from individual inspiration to social network is also evident in the tourism literature, and in particular in a series of articles in *Annals of Tourism Research*. Early links between tourism and creativity were made through analyses of creative activities in destinations which might be of interest to tourists—usually ‘cultural tourists’ or ‘special interest tourists’ (Zeppel & Hall, 1992) consuming creative performances or crafts products. For example Richter (1978) analyzed the social changes that occurred in a group of traditional woodcarvers with their participation in the tourist art market. Creighton (1995) studied silk-weaving holidays in Japan, and Daniel (1996) analyzed the creative role of dance performances in the Caribbean. There was a particularly strong thread of literature around the theme of ‘tourist arts’, which often traced the way in which local arts products had been transformed by tourism (Boynton, 1986; Graburn, 1984). A special issue of *Annals* edited by Eric Cohen (1993) was devoted to the issue of tourist arts, drawing mainly on arts production in developing countries (e.g. Horner, 1993; Swain, 1993). As Cohen (1993, p. 1) noted: “Early commentators tended to criticize or disparage tourist arts, rather than to study them as a legitimate field of anthropological and sociological inquiry”.

The creativity literature related to tourist arts later developed in two main directions: supply and demand. Cohen (1995) analyzed the development of craft markets in response to tourism development and Littrell and others researched the factors that influenced tourists to purchase textile art (Cohen, 2001; Littrell, 1990). The basic assumption in many of these early studies was that ‘local’ creativity adapted itself to the tourist, and that the tourist was largely unchanged by creative encounters (Bruner 1989). In many cases tourism was seen as a ‘potentially destructive’ force for the arts and creative expression (Hughes, 1989).

This perspective of tourism as an alienating force began to shift as the role of performativity in tourism was identified. The work of [Fine and Speer \(1985, p. 82\)](#) underlined the fact that tour guides enter into a negotiation process which determines the degree of ‘communal creativity’ which will develop with tourists during the tour. They saw the tour guide role as a performance, which developed in creative collaboration with the tourists. This approach was echoed in a different context by [Edensor’s \(2000\)](#) study of tourists at the Taj Mahal. This was one of the first studies to analyze tourist performance in detail, but other aspects of creative tourist performance have since been identified, including ‘hip hop tourism’ ([Xie, Osumare, & Ibrahim, 2007](#)) ‘tango tourism’ ([Morel, 2009](#); [Richards & Wilson, 2006](#)) and visits to art museums in Las Vegas ([Braun-La Tour, Hendler, & Hendler, 2006](#)).

There has also been increased attention for the growing role of the creative industries in developing tourism and particularly in influencing the image of destinations. For example film-induced tourism ([Beeton, 2005](#)) has recently attracted much attention, driven by the success of films such as *Lord of the Rings* in New Zealand ([Jones & Smith, 2005](#)) *Harry Potter* in the United Kingdom and *The Beach* in Thailand ([Hudson & Brent Ritchie, 2006](#)). Music tourism has also become an identifiable creative niche, covering travel for acquiring music skills, to attend concerts and less formal music events ([Gibson & Connell, 2003](#)). Gastronomic tourism has become more active, going beyond the mere tasting of food into a range of courses and experiences aimed at honing cooking and consumption skills ([Richards, 2002](#)) or even developing new cuisines ([Cohen & Avieli, 2004](#)).

More recent work has tended to emphasize the role of ‘co-creation’ or ‘prosumption’, involving the creative collaboration in developing tourism practices by both consumers and producers. [Gibson and Connell \(2005\)](#) cite the important role of tourists in shaping music performances around the world and adding new, creative dimensions to traditional music forms, [Binkhorst \(2007\)](#) and [Binkhorst and den Dekker \(2009\)](#) explore how co-creation has been developed in places as diverse as Sitges (Barcelona) and Venlo (Limburg). [Buchmann, Moore, and Fisher \(2010\)](#) also argue that the tours taken by film tourists are engaged in a form of ‘collective creation and, in that purposeful and creative process, the authenticity of the experience is judged.’ (p. 242). The co-creation of experiences also extends to more mundane aspects of tourism, including the dining experience ([Morgan, Watson, & Hemmington, 2008](#); [Prebensen & Foss, 2011](#)). Recent work on the development of tourism in cities has also underlined how tourists effectively become ‘placemakers’, adding to the vitality and liveliness of cities as well inhabiting new areas of cross-cultural communication and creativity ([Hayllar, Griffin, & Edwards, 2008](#); [Maitland & Newman, 2009](#)).

Over the years, therefore, creativity has therefore been repositioned in tourism studies from a narrow market niche related mainly to the arts and craft products into a much broader phenomenon which touches a wide range of tourism activities. This broadening view has been accompanied by analyses of creativity as a general force for

tourism development (e.g. Wurzbürger, Aageson, Pattakos, & Pratt, 2010). More studies have also emerged that have laid the groundwork for a theoretical approach to the relationship between creativity and tourism, particularly focusing on the de-differentiation of production and consumption (Richards & Wilson, 2006), the development of different forms of creative tourism (Richards & Wilson, 2007) and the development of ‘co-creation’ in tourism (Binkhorst & den Dekker, 2009).

‘Creative tourism’ was first mentioned as a potential form of tourism by Pearce and Butler (1993), although they did not define the term. During the 90s there was growing attention for creativity not only in cities, but also in rural areas. One example of this was the development of ‘crafts tourism’, as exemplified in the EUROTEx project undertaken in Finland, Greece and Portugal between 1996 and 1999 (Richards, 1998, 2005). This project identified the growing tourist interest in local vernacular culture, everyday life and the desire to become more involved through active creative learning experiences. As a direct result of this work, Richards and Raymond (2000, p.18) provided the first analysis of creative tourism and produced the following definition: “Tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken”.

This concept was also taken up by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Creative Cities Network, which produced its own definition:

Creative tourism is travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture. (UNESCO, 2006, p. 3).

Raymond (2007) also produced a revised definition of creative tourism, which in the light of his experience in developing creative tourism in New Zealand, he saw as being:

A more sustainable form of tourism that provides an authentic feel for a local culture through informal, hands-on workshops and creative experiences. Workshops take place in small groups at tutors’ homes and places of work; they allow visitors to explore their creativity while getting closer to local people (p. 145).

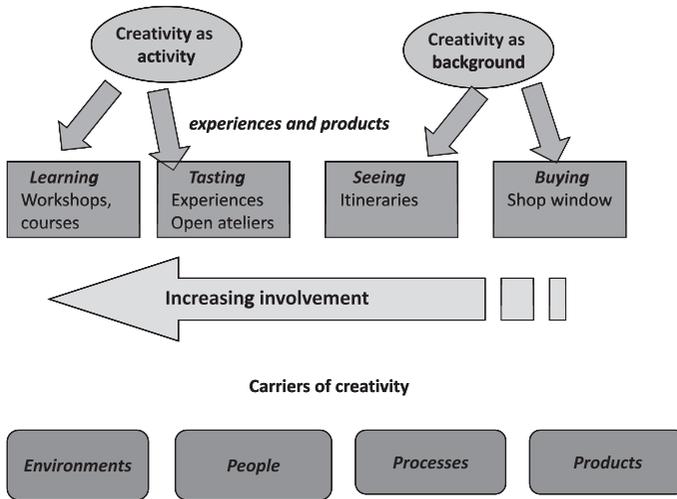
Although these definitions differ in emphasis, there are clear common elements: participative, ‘authentic’ experiences that allow tourists to develop their creative potential and skills through contact with local people and their culture. This formulation suggests a shift towards active rather than passive forms of consumption, and an emphasis on ‘living’ or ‘intangible’ culture rather than static, tangible cultural heritage. The essence of creative tourism seems to lie in activities and experiences related to self-realization and self-expression whereby tourists become co-performers and co-creators as they develop their creative skills.

Richards and Raymond (2000) particularly emphasized the fact that creative tourism implies that not just the tourists need to be creatively involved, but the destination itself needs to become more creative in designing ‘characteristic’ experiences. This means that the destination needs to think carefully about the aspects of creativity that are linked to place, and which give creative tourists a specific motivation to visit. This also makes it important that creativity is also embedded or anchored in the destination. Every location has the potential to provide a unique combination of knowledge, skills, physical assets, social capital and ‘atmosphere’ which make certain places particularly suited to specific creative activities. Sometimes this uniqueness can be traced to a particular creative tradition, such as the ceramic production of Icheon in Korea (Korean National Commission for UNESCO, 2010) or tango dancing in Buenos Aires (Morel, 2009). In other cases the development of a particular cultural ‘scene’ can provide the creative link, such as the Mersey Sound in Liverpool or the British art movement in St Ives (Stevens, 2003) or artistic colonies in France (Herbert, 1996). Creativity can also grow up around specific events, such as the Edinburgh Festival (Prentice & Andersen, 2003) or the Roskilde Festival (Bærenholdt & Haldrup, 2006).

Specific local skills are often also seen as a source of creative tourism development. For example the work of Miettinen (2007, 2008) on craft development in Namibia shows how local crafts communities have developed creative tourism through transferring craft making and design skills to tourists. The female craft producers in Namibia illustrate how the power relations in tourism can be changed, because instead of the guest being the one served, the local is instead seen as a source of knowledge and skills from which the tourist can learn. Raymond (2007) analyses the role of crafts producers in New Zealand in developing ‘authentic’ experiences for tourists and Richards (2005) also examines the development of craft-based creative experiences for tourists in Finland, Greece and Portugal. As Fillis (2009, p. 146) argues: ‘One of the strengths of the crafts sector is the ability of those working within it to utilize their creativity both to overcome the limited resources at their disposal and to work out how to create and appeal to potential customers.’

The burgeoning field of creative tourism now accommodates a wide range of styles and products. The volume edited by Richards and Wilson (2007) contains a range of contributions on the relationship between creativity and tourism, from the creativity inherent in natural phenomena (Cloke, 2007) to the creative role of ethnic enclaves (Shaw, 2007) and cultural quarters (Evans, 2007; Meethan & Beer, 2007) and the creativity of the ‘fantasy city’ (Hannigan, 2007) or the gay scene (Hodes, Vork, Gerritsma, & Bras, 2007). As a result of this review of creative tourism development models, Figure 1 provides an overview of the different styles of creative tourism, ranging from more active to more passive types of creative activities and involving different types of creativity.

Creative tourism is therefore about far more than the formal provision of learning experiences described by Raymond (2007). As Landry



**Figure 1. Modes of Creative Tourism**

(2010, p. 37) argues, creative tourism provides opportunities for tourists to ‘get under the skin’ of a place: “Much of the activity is ordinary, like seeing people go to work, waiting in a queue to catch a bus, standing outside the office and smoking, buying a drink or a sandwich, chatting on the sidewalks, or watching young lovers canoodle on a bench”.

Given the range of tourism experiences that can now be described as ‘creative’, some authors have begun to identify a shift from cultural tourism to creative tourism. Jelincić (2009) notes an increasing splintering of cultural tourism as more creative activities are developed by tourists to match fragmented postmodern lifestyles and D’Auria (2009) sees the rise of creative tourism as an evolution of cultural tourism directed toward more engaged and authentic experiences. Fernandez (2010) argues that the rise of models of creative tourism is due to an evolution of the tourism production system. The broadening discussion of the relationship between cultural tourism and creative tourism indicates that the latter is emerging as more than just a niche within cultural tourism; a point which is underlined by the new models of creative tourism described in the following section.

## EMERGING MODELS OF CREATIVE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

In essence, the types of creative developments identified in tourism to date tend to fall into three basic categories: creative spectacles, creative spaces and creative tourism (Richards & Wilson, 2006).

### *Creative Spectacles*

The growing importance of events in the contemporary network society is outlined in a growing body of literature detailing the relationship

between events, space and tourism (González Reverté & Morales Pérez, 2009; Johnson, 2009; Richards & Palmer, 2010). Cities and rural spaces increasingly host events that shape and are in turn shaped by their environment.

Events act as a concentrator in terms of time and space, forming important nodes in creative networks and providing a direct link between creativity and tourism. Morgan (2007) describes these processes in the case of the Sidmouth Festival in the United Kingdom, which provides a setting where communities of enthusiasts can co-create extraordinary experiences. Similarly Prentice and Andersen (2003) examine the role of the Edinburgh Festival as a 'creative destination' which attracts a significant group of creative tourists with a specific interest in culture. Paiola (2008) examined three Italian festivals and concluded that events can have a significant impact on local creativity, particularly where they support local networks. In Japan, Hiroyuki (2003:228) sees the rice transplanting ritual *Mibu no Hana-taue* as a creative ritual that has developed through tourism. Crespi Vallbona and Richards (2007) examined a range of festivals in Barcelona and found that they had become creative spaces capable of renovating and reinvigorating local culture, both for local residents and tourists. Events are therefore increasingly sources of creative experiences which connect the global space of flows with the local space of places (Castells, 2009). It is not surprising that a range of different studies has underlined the growing importance of events in developing economic and cultural connectedness between places and communities (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003; McLean, 2006).

### *Creative Spaces*

Perhaps the most obvious physical manifestation of the relationship between tourism and creativity is to be found in creative or cultural clusters. As explained above, clustering of creative activities is driven by both production and consumption functions, with a Florida-like coincidence of creative people, creative industries and a creative 'buzz'. Sacco and Segre (2009, p. 287) point to the growth of 'cultural districts' where "culture is a source of prosperity and cosmopolitanism through international events and centers of excellence, driving high growth business sectors such as creative industries, commercial leisure and tourism". These can become a form of 'thirdspace', or a "space of hybridity, which is established by an interaction between different groups or individuals in a shared spatial encounter" (Mommaas, 2009a, p. 3).

Creativity becomes a backdrop for 'cool' places, enlivened by the development of specific creative industries, most notably film, fashion and design. These in turn provide the basis for new tourism products in cities as diverse as Beijing (van der Borg, van Tuijl, & Costa, 2010), Berlin (Van Heur, 2009), Johannesburg (Rogerson, 2007), Rome (Gemmiti, 2007) and Seoul (Kim, 2007). In Barcelona fashion and film have been turned into specific tourist products through the

development of events, cultural routes and themed spaces. **Chilese and Russo (2008)** describe the development of fashion-related clusters in Barcelona, and a series of cultural routes related to film production have recently been developed in the same city ([www.barcelonamovie.com](http://www.barcelonamovie.com)). Arthouse cinema can also become the focus for creative tourism development, as **Cazzetta (2010)** describes in the case of the Filmbyen cluster in Copenhagen, based on the Dogma film tradition. **Russo and Aria Sans (2009)** also argue that students are becoming increasingly important shapers of space in cities as their numbers grow and the provision of student housing in city centers begins to produce particular student-related cultural scenes. Such processes are the object of specific intervention policies, as **Meethan and Beer (2007)** describe in the case of Plymouth in the United Kingdom. The development of specific clusters can also form part of a broader creative landscape. In the case of Istanbul **Alvarez (2010)** sees the development of creative clusters as part of broader creative city approach, which is also aimed to attract tourists. These types of developments are often examples of what **Hutton (2008)** refers to as the ‘new inner city’, where a new production economy is being stimulated by the presence of cultural and creative tourists, among other factors.

In many cases such creative landscapes and clusters undergo a process of evolution from original grittiness and ruggedness to more urbane sophistication, with a corresponding change in residents and tourist flows (**Hannigan, 1998; Zukin, 2010**). In East London **Pappalepore (2010)** examined the development of different creative tourism clusters and found that previously touristically marginal areas such as London Fields are gradually being incorporated into mainstream tourism through processes of gentrification and art-led regeneration. Spitalfields is now an established off-the-beaten-track destination in East London that is starting to attract more mainstream tourists with its alternative ‘atmosphere’ provided by independent shops, young artists, new fashions, and cultural diversity. All these elements contribute to make the area seem distinctive, but at the same time ‘typically London’ (**Pappalepore, Maitland, & Smith, 2010**). Ethnic enclaves are also subject to similar pressures of change as the composition of the ethnic population changes through successive waves of migration and gentrification. This may cause problems of maintaining ‘authentic’ ethnic culture and atmosphere (**Shaw, 2007**).

Although much of the research on creative spaces has concentrated on cities, **Bell and Jayne (2010)** also point to the emergence of the ‘creative countryside’ and **Paul Cloke (2007)** underlines the development of creativity as practice in rural tourism. **Wojan, Lambert, and McGranahan (2007)** trace the development of rural ‘artistic havens’ that often started out as artist colonies but are now being transformed in creative hubs, craft production centers and creative tourism destinations. **Stolarick, Denstedt, Donald, and Spencer (2010)** show how Prince Edward Country has become “Canada’s First Creative Rural Economy Founded by Pioneers, Artisans and Entrepreneurs” (**Prince Edward County, 2011**). Creative tourism is being developed here as one strand in a creative class strategy that seems to have generated

impressive results, including a 74% increase in tourism visits and 168% increase in tourism revenues between 1999 and 2004.

### *Creative Tourism*

The growth of creative tourism in some ways marks a shift towards a more general approach to creativity in tourism, and is found both in rural and urban environments. Maturing approaches to creative tourism are marked by the development of specific development strategies, such as those found in Nelson, New Zealand ([www.creativetourism.co.nz](http://www.creativetourism.co.nz)) and Barcelona ([www.barcelonacreativa.info](http://www.barcelonacreativa.info)), which have been operating for a number of years. In the case of Creative Tourism New Zealand, the creative tourism offer is built around a series of courses and workshops offered by local artisans. In Barcelona the approach is related to the development of artistic links with other cities, offering artists the opportunity to meet and collaborate with Barcelona-based colleagues. The idea is that this form of creative exchange not only generates incoming tourism activity, but also strengthens the creative vitality and international image of Barcelona. For this reason the program is supported by the economic development division of the city government. In the City of Santa Fe in New Mexico, a comprehensive range of creative tourism experiences has been developed ([www.santafecreativetourism.org](http://www.santafecreativetourism.org)). This initiative sprang out of the UNESCO Creative Cities program, which also organized an international conference on creative tourism in the city in 2008 (Wurzburger et al., 2010). Creative tourism strategies have also been applied in more conventional tourism destinations, such as the Algarve region of Portugal (Ferreira & Costa, 2006; Rodrigues Gonçalves, 2008).

Creative tourism can also form part of wider creative industries strategies, as in the case of the 'Creative Austria' program. One spin-off from this program has been the establishment of Creative Tourism Austria (<http://www.creativetourism.at/>). Singapore has also begun to position itself as a creative hub in Asia, also using tourism as a vehicle for creative development (Ooi, 2007).

Recently the 'Nordic Model' of experience development in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden has seen many destinations adopt policies which combine culture, tourism and creativity into an overall system of experience production and consumption. As Cazzetta (2010, pp. 9–10) notes, the definition of creative industries in the Nordic region tends to be very broad, encompassing sport, tourism, toys and theme parks, within the experience economy. This fusion has meant that "a new form of economy has emerged. An economy based on rising demand for experiences that build on the added value creativity generates both in new and more traditional products and services" (Danish Government, 2003, p. 8). This model of experience development also seems closely aligned to the development of creative tourism, as Lindroth, Ritalahti, and Soisalon-Soininen (2007) and Miettinen (2009) show in the case of Finland and Kvistgaard (2008) illustrates in the case of Denmark.

## THE CREATIVE TOURISM DEBATE

There has been much debate on the ‘creative turn’, and whether the current vogue for creativity is a hype or a valuable development strategy. This debate also seems to be emerging in the creative tourism field as well. Those who have identified the advantages of creative tourism (e.g. Richards & Raymond, 2000; Richards & Wilson, 2007) tend to point to a number of features that distinguish creative tourism from more conventional forms, such as the avoidance of serial reproduction, the potential for more freedom and more meaningful experiences for the tourist and the development of a more equal relationship between tourist and host. Creative tourism approaches also arguably provide the potential for the development of new narratives, meanings and identities in tourist destinations.

To date, however, there has been limited empirical research on the effects of creative tourism. Research by the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education (ATLAS) in 2004 indicated that only around 5% of cultural visitors in Europe saw their holidays as ‘creative’ (ATLAS, 2011). This may well indicate that the ‘creative’ label is just as difficult for tourists to identify with as the term ‘cultural tourism’ (less than 30% of tourists surveyed by ATLAS at cultural attractions saw themselves as ‘cultural tourists’). It may also be that the term ‘creative’ is not as attractive for tourists as it apparently is for academics and policy makers. In any case, it seems that creative tourism is likely to remain as a niche within cultural tourism in the foreseeable future. A recent study by *Barcelona Turisme Creatiu* (2010) indicated that cultural organizations in the city had hosted almost 14,000 creative tourists in 2010, with an estimated expenditure of \$4 million. This is significant as an alternative form of tourism, but still dwarfed by the city’s mainstream cultural tourism industry, which attracts millions of tourists a year (Font, 2005). This also points to the need to develop new ways of measuring creative tourism and its effects. So far, most effort has been concentrated on the experiences of creative producers, but there is also a need to survey tourists visiting regions where these products are being developed. A more concrete view on the prevalence of creative tourism could also be gained by adding this as a category in population surveys of tourism demand.

A similar absence of hard evidence has also stimulated criticism of creativity-based development strategies in general (Hartley, 2007; Pratt, 2008), particularly as more places have taken up the ideas of Florida, Landry and other creativity ‘gurus’ (Atkinson & Easthope, 2009). Creativity can be seen as a particularly virulent form of ‘fast policy’ (Peck, 2005) which is often adopted because of its attractiveness to policy makers. Such policies add to the dangers of an image and branding led approach (Evans, 2003) that can often exacerbate problems of ‘serial reproduction’ (Richards & Wilson, 2006). In some cases it also seems that such strategies are adopted with the help of ‘policy-based evidence’ rather than ‘evidence-based policy’ (House of Commons, 2006). This underlines the fact that in some cities and regions the adoption of creative strategies may depend more on the ‘hype’ of

creativity and ‘gurus’ such as Richard Florida and Charles Landry than a serious evaluation of need.

These criticisms could also apply more specifically to the field of creative tourism, depending on the manner and context in which this is being developed. Richards and Wilson (2007) show that there is a weak relationship between Florida’s indices of creativity and the development of tourism, and they also indicate that creativity has become a hype in many different destinations, and that key consultants and academics have been important in feeding this hype. There are also problems in managing creativity, as the spontaneous nature of much creative activity does not lend itself easily to planning, top-down management or tourist schedules (e.g. Suutari, Saartenoja, Salo, & Kareinen, 2010). Many have therefore suggested that creativity should be encouraged to emerge from the bottom up, through ‘natural’ rather than externally created clusters (Scott, 2006). But as Miles (2010) notes intervention is needed, because creative tourists are not just passively consuming the city, but actively engaging with it to produce their own experiences. This puts the onus on destinations to encourage active involvement of the tourist, but “at the present, creative tourism is more of an aspiration than a reality” (p. 62).

One of the problems in developing active involvement of tourists in the everyday creative life of the destination is the extent to which this facilitates the extension of commodification. Lengkeek (1996), following Habermas, has identified the development of tourism as part of a progressive ‘colonization of the lifeworld’, as tourism appropriates the ‘exotic’ and renders it as everyday experience to be traded in the marketplace. This process has already been well charted in cultural tourism (e.g. Russo, 2002), but in creative tourism it takes on a new dimension because it tends to involve more elements of everyday life and the intangible, embedded culture of the host community. It remains to be seen if creative tourism experiences become ‘homogenized’, as suggested by Edensor (2000) or if the inherent creativity of communities and individuals will enable them to co-create new lived spaces as Cloke (2007) suggests. The outcome may depend on the ability of producers and consumers to maintain the embeddedness of tacit creative knowledge, which will continue to stimulate tourists and hosts to co-create knowledge and skills through negotiated co-presence.

## CONCLUSION

As in many other disciplines, creativity has increasingly become a focus of attention for tourism scholars in recent years. Although the concept of creativity remains elusive to define, it has been integrated into tourism in a range of different forms, via creative people, products, processes and places. This creative wave has been driven by both productive and consumption-related forces, including the growth of the experience economy, the need to valorize culture and the postmodern fragmentation of demand.

The growth of creative approaches to tourism can also be linked to the various strategies to create distinctive places, including the promotion of creative industries, creative cities and the creative class. Arguably these different strategies manifest themselves concretely through the absorption of creative production and consumption into specific creative clusters. These nodes in creative networks can link the various creative industries and creative people with tourism, anchoring flows of knowledge, images and power in specific local spaces. The growth of cultural and creative events has also served to provide a particular concentration of creativity in time and space which is also extremely attractive to tourists and others in search of co-presence (Richards, 2010).

Creativity provides activity, content and atmosphere for tourism, and tourism in turn supports creative activities. The growing integration of tourism and creativity is evident in the treatment of tourism as a creative industry. This integration has also led some to identify a specific form of 'creative tourism', which involves the co-creation of participative, 'authentic' experiences that allow people to develop their creative potential and skills through contact with local people and culture. Specific creative tourism initiatives have sprung up in a range of places, including major cities and artistic havens in rural areas. These types of initiatives are often based on the idea of providing an alternative to the serial reproduction that affects much cultural tourism, and they are often spearheaded by 'lifestyle entrepreneurs' trying to generate economic capital from their creative skills.

Creative tourism is therefore often seen as a development of cultural tourism, which has arguably become increasingly mainstream over the years. The irony is that creative tourism, in apparently offering an alternative to mass cultural tourism, may be far more effective in spearheading new forms of commodification. The object of commodification shifts from the tangible heritage long valorized through cultural tourism towards the intangible culture of everyday life, leading to a further 'colonization of the lifeworld' (Lengkeek, 1996). It also seems that notions of 'authenticity' are shifting in models of creative tourism. The material and contextual forms of authenticity so important in the tangible heritage of cultural tourism are being replaced by more conceptual forms of authenticity which are judged according to the concept of the original performer or maker (Ex & Lengkeek, 1996). In the co-creation of creative tourism experiences, conceptual authenticity is arguably negotiated in situ by the host and the tourist, each playing a role as the originator of the experience. This also represents a shift from the externally-defined forms of distinction so prevalent in cultural tourism towards a more internal, skills-based model of distinction.

The intensity of such participative models of creative tourism makes it unlikely that it will move into the mass market of cultural tourism. However, creativity may well play an important part in mainstream tourism experiences by adding to the atmosphere of places, forming part of the 'buzz' apparently so important to attracting the creative class. In view of this complexity perhaps creative tourism is not a coherent 'niche' at all, but rather a series of creative practices linking production, consumption and place. The creativity involved in creative

tourism is also not limited to a single actor, such as the tourists themselves, but involves the creative interplay of producers, consumers, policy makers and landscapes to develop embedded creativity in tourism experiences.

The evolving relationship between creativity and tourism may therefore force us to re-think some important aspects of contemporary tourism. In particular, the dichotomous roles of the tourist as sovereign chooser or unfortunate dupe are eroded by the creative interplay of different actors and contexts in the making and performance of tourism experiences. Tourists not only visit places, they also make them, and the point of creative tourism should be to ensure that co-maker-ship happens through an exchange of skills and knowledge with those who are visited. **A**

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