Towards alternative ecologies of encounter: crafting a vital materialist perspective of cultural entrepreneurship

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St.Gallen, May 28, 2021

The President:

Prof. Dr. Bernhard Ehrenzeller

To my friends: you always knew this would happen, to Taylor Swift who kept me going and to the wind grazing my skin, keeping me inspired.

‘Real isn’t how you are made’, said the Skin horse. ‘It is a thing that happens to you.’ ‘Does it hurt?’ asked the Rabbit. ‘Sometimes,’ said the Skin Horse, for he was always truthful. ‘When you are Real you don’t mind being hurt.’

Margery Williams Bianco

Acknowledgments

Writing a PhD is a becoming, or it is at best. As I was finishing this PhD, inevitably, I realized that it seems to be foremost the becoming of a text. Endless versions of toner powder molded on paper. Black pixels that fight against the aura of the flickering screen in the early mornings of writing. It is the becoming of an arrangement of letters and symbols, images and punctuations that hover in front of our eyes. They are born out of stumbling trails of thinking, reading, listening, talking, analysing and typing, eventually thickening into a text, a story. Together, so I hope, they compose a new layer of meaning – a different knowledge of the beings, flows and situations which enveloped me as I followed this research trajectory. At the same time, the becoming of the text in its irrevocable materiality is the effect of other, maybe even more important becomings: the becoming of me as a researcher/writer/academic and the becoming of a field of enquiry that I was not quite able to grasp as I set out on this research adventure. It is the becoming of a proliferating set of questions and, as I discovered to my own surprise and satisfaction, the becoming of a conversation. A conversation between me and the empirical setting that kept puzzling, intriguing and daring me and a conversation between me and the different academic communities that I started to explore as I was discussing and presenting my research – communities that will hopefully keep accompanying me as my academic journey continues. Of course, this becoming of the text and me as a researcher is not an individual occurrence. Rather, we (the text and I) owe it to an ecology of different people, things, bodies, places and rhythms that all played a crucial part making this emergence possible for the both of us. This ecology is too big and too subtle to do it justice in any way. Yet, I will give it a try by dedicating special thanks to a few fellow inhabitants of this sticky web of resonances and connections. With your presence and your generosity, you have made a tremendous difference to this trajectory. I am forever grateful to you, not only for supporting me and this project, but for allowing us to become what we are today.

When I think about the becoming of this thesis, I can't help but think how this becoming is tied to certain encounters that serendipitously pierce through the current of our life. One such intersection was certainly the Master's course on 'Creativity and Entrepreneurship' held by my PhD supervisor Chris Steyaert. Attending your course in so many ways felt like the beginning of an intellectual homecoming in a

place where I least expected it: a business school. Here, my curiosity for creative and entrepreneurial processes, my sensitivity for the body, aesthetics and space, my interest in the critical societal thinking of Foucault and Deleuze suddenly started to resonate in unexpected ways. Your intellectual curiosity, your observant feedback, your engaged and sensuous writing and teaching style continuously inspired and challenged me throughout this process. As I was configuring this PhD, you taught me to harbor my strengths while gently nudging me towards areas of development. You threw me in at the deep end when I needed it while always having an open ear for my concerns, both professional and personal. In the years that you supervised me, that I have worked for you and that we collaborated together, you gave me an intricate sense of the pleasures, privileges, tensions and ambivalences implied in academic life. And in all that, you kept conveying to me that what we do matters. Another such wonderful incision, I can trace back to my Master's course on transcultural theory where I met my co-supervisor Martin Müller. You were one of the first to suggest to me that I should consider writing a PhD as we pleasurably ravelled through the threads of contemporary theory, believing that I had something to contribute long before I believed it myself. Your encouraging feedback at central stages of this project as well as your critical eye for methods and concepts, your careful consideration for literature and feminist concerns were a constant companion and encouraging reminder as I organized and reorganized the core of this research project. They titillated me to make the project more feminist, more material and more affective and inspired me to articulate new exciting relations from the hinterland of this research assemblage.

The becoming of a PhD is an also entanglement. In the case of this research, it is in particular an entanglement with two artists and the complex web of activities and accomplices that organize around their entrepreneurial and artistic endeavours. Frank and Patrik, you invited me to follow the wild materiality and affectivity of your work, giving me a glimpse into the doubts and uplifting encounters, struggles and everyday triumphs that keep shaping your development. Sitting in your studio or voyaging together through Switzerland, your warmth, support, generosity and humour made this research an audacious, intimate and incredibly fun ride that I will always treasure. Your excitement and openness with regards to this project kept spilling over to me, but also to the many accomplices in your orbit that lent me their voices and were willing to share their experiences, both critical and personal. Rolf, Marcel, Thomas, Mark, Tanja, Jasmin, Franziska, Jasmin, Daniel, Samira, Philipp, Oli, Roman, Kathrin, Gabriela,

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The becoming of this research (text) is also tied to a place that has become an unexpected home, a sweet sanctuary over the time of this PhD. Indeed, if life had not somehow flushed me to the shores of this unassuming town, I might never have written a PhD. Something about St. Gallen gives me the feeling that life here is rooting for me, holding me in its cordial embrace. I already miss the crisp air blazing through my lungs as I cycle home after work, bringing me a tinted glance of the Säntis, the homely dark of the concrete walls that hug me as we walk to the campus canteen, or the layers of snow that creak happily as I climb the stairs meandering up the hills. Of course, a place only really becomes a place because of the people that invite you to live to its beat. And indeed, there are many people that have made St. Gallen the right place for me and this PhD. For one, there are certainly all the people at the OPSY: Katharina, Mark, Anne, the two Julias, Christina, Florian, Bernhard, Dominik, Patrizia, Christoph, Tim, Björn, Chrysa, Verena, I don't know (and I don't want to know) what this PhD would have been without your emotional and intellectual support. Our shared lunch strolls, chocolate and tea breaks, collective reflections, vented frustrations, grading laughs and occasional nonsense have been the everyday salt seasoning my PhD life. Although research at times can be a lonely undertaking, you always gave me an acute sense that we are in this together. Then there are my friends and family that have inhabited this place with me, both metaphorical and real. Your unwavering faith grounded me in meaningfulness of this project no matter what crap, I mean lemons, life was throwing at me. You held me steady when I was tripping, teaching me that one can never be too human. Dear Agnes, Martina, Dominique, Luci, Dana, Sandra, Salome, Michaela, Petra, Johanna, Anina, Jasmin, Suzanne, Emma, Karin, Brian, Diego, Daniel und Christoph, words cannot express how much our relationships mean to me. Thank you for being there for me during the hardship, joy, excitement and angst. You make my life and this research thrive. A special thanks goes to Sandra Cox and Norbert Jenal, who helped me elevate the materiality of this research text to a different level with their language and video expertise. I also want to thank two nonhuman friends that have contributed significantly to my wellbeing throughout the past years and the

person that guided our relationship – the two horses Fabio and Belly and my horse-riding trainer, Jenny. You not only taught me to ride but allowed me to experience the magnetic force of this interlocking of strength and vulnerability, courage and trust that forges our encounter over and over again, making it an unbounded well of happiness waiting for me to tap into.

Ultimately, when I think of the becoming of this research trajectory, I think of it as a strange melody that is rippling through my veins, making me sit slightly more upright, anxious and attentive to the promise that has brushed against my soul. Although research is often portrayed as a cognitive endeavour, it has always felt like something intimately physical to me, as much body as mind. And hence, in so many ways, I owe the becoming of this PhD to my own body which steadily accommodated this melody and its sensation. A body that brought me back to the strange calling of this song when I tried to shut it out, overwhelmed and scared by where it might take me. A body that carried and swayed this melody through sickness and health and the various degrees of darkness and light that seem to lie in between them. A body that gave room to the vast intensities through which this song spiralled as the PhD moved on: the strenuous periods of (binge) writing, the ephemeral flow of data collecting, the burbling surge of analysing. It is within him and her, I discovered, that we find truth, solace and reimagination. S/he is the secret portal to our own power and invincibility. Ultimately, becoming is always a trace, a perpetual longing. This project and the kind of topography it tries to map is fixed in black ink or pixels that unravel its story, for now. The affections and thoughts, the bodies and relationships that have articulated it will keep moving, keep becoming.

Christina Lüthy, September 2020

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Abstract

In the wake of an aesthetic capitalism, the cultural and creative industries (CCI) have become a growing and thriving sector of Western and other economies. Cultural entrepreneurial processes propel the CCI and their regime of aesthetic innovation and constitute constantly evolving art worlds. My dissertation focuses on the material-affective dimensions of these art worlds. It explores cultural entrepreneurial processes from a vital materialist perspective in order to understand the role of sociomaterial relations and affective capacities in the production and transformation of these art worlds as well as their critical-political underpinnings. To address these research concerns empirically, my thesis conceptualizes entrepreneurial processes as heterogeneous assemblages that articulate and challenge sociomaterial orders and create dynamic ecologies of encounter between different affective bodies. Empirically, it turns to the case of a Swiss art enterprise and adopts an affective ethnography for the data creation and analysis.

In the first analysis, the dissertation focuses on the sociomaterial relations in the entrepreneurial process of the art enterprise and one of its key projects. It theorizes this process as one of experimentation and argues that the cultural entrepreneurial process moves and sustains by articulating a fragile and dynamic 'experimental system'. The analysis then carves out the microdynamics of this process of entrepreneurial experimentation and emphasizes the capacity of experimentation to create new regional ontologies. The vital materialist model of entrepreneurial experimentation contributes to a more material understanding of how cultural entrepreneurial processes navigate agency and constraint and create institutional agency to innovate art worlds. By highlighting how cultural entrepreneurial experimentation re-matters reality and reconfigures the systems of 'self-others-things' that organize our everyday experience, the analysis also points towards the 'onto-political' capacity of cultural entrepreneurship.

The second analysis focuses on the bodily encounters and affective capacities created by the art projects of the enterprise. It shows how the cultural entrepreneurial process articulates a different ecology of intensities by fostering ecological couplings that subvert dominant modes of ordering. The analysis further elaborates on how the entrepreneurial process draws upon an interplay of four affective tactics to move the affective capacities of bodies towards enacting and sustaining this alternative ecology of encounters. The analysis hence contributes to a more embodied understanding of the relational work which cultural entrepreneurs engage in to create momentum and support for their entrepreneurial initiatives and shift institutional boundaries. Ultimately, it argues that this ecology of encounter as an 'affective commons' produces different collectively shared and fostered affective relations that point towards the 'ethico-political' capacity of cultural entrepreneurship.

Zusammenfassung

Angesichts eines ästhetischen Kapitalismus ist die Kultur- und Kreativwirtschaft (CCI) zu einem florierenden Bestandteil von westlichen und anderen Volkswirtschaften geworden. Unternehmerische Prozesse treiben die CCI und sein Regime der ästhetischen Innovation an und produzieren sich laufend erneuernde Kunstwelten. Meine Dissertation fokussiert auf die affektiv-materielle Dimension dieser Kunstwelten. Sie untersucht unternehmerische Prozesse in der Kultur- und Kreativwirtschaft aus der Perspektive des 'neuen' oder 'vitalen' Materialismus, um zu verstehen, welche Rolle soziomaterielle Beziehungen und affektive Kapazitäten in der Produktion und Transformation dieser Kunstwelten spielen und was für ein kritisch-politisches Potenzial sie entfalten. Entsprechend konzeptualisiert die Dissertation unternehmerische Prozesse in der CCI als heterogene 'Assemblagen', die soziomaterielle Ordnungen artikulieren und dynamische 'Begegnungsökologien' zwischen unterschiedlichen affektiven Körpern schaffen. Empirisch baut sie auf die affektive Ethnographie eines Schweizer Kunstunternehmens.

Die erste Analyse fokussiert auf die soziomateriellen Beziehungen im unternehmerischen Prozess. Sie theoretisiert diesen Prozess als ein Experimentieren und argumentiert, dass kulturunternehmerische Prozesse sich entlang von fragilen und dynamischen experimentellen Systemen bewegen und erhalten. Die Analyse arbeitet die Mikrodynamiken dieses Experimentierens heraus und betont seine Fähigkeit, neue regionale Ontologien zu schaffen. Damit trägt die Analyse zu einem verstärkt materiellen Verständnis dafür bei, wie kulturelle Unternehmer Hindernisse überwinden und institutionelle Handlungsfähigkeit für Innovationen in Kunstwelten produzieren. Indem die Analyse hervorhebt, wie sich im Prozess des Experimentierens neue Realitäten materialisieren und das System von 'Selbst-Anderen-Dingen', welches unsere Alltagserfahrung organisiert, rekonfiguriert wird, verweist sie auch auf das onto-politische Potenzial des Kulturunternehmertums.

Die zweite Analyse fokussiert auf die körperlichen Begegnungen und affektiven Kapazitäten, die in diesem Prozess geschaffen werden. Sie zeigt auf, dass der unternehmerische Prozess eine andere Ökologie von Intensitäten artikuliert, indem er ökologische Kopplungen fördert, die dominante Ordnungsmodi unterwandern. Die Analyse arbeitet ein Zusammenspiel von vier affektiven Taktiken heraus, welche die affektiven Kapazitäten von Körpern zur Ausübung und Erhaltung dieser alternativen Begegnungsökologie bewegen. Entsprechend leistet die Analyse einen Beitrag zu einem verkörperteren Verständnis der Beziehungsarbeit bei, die Kulturunternehmer leisten, um ihre Projekte in Schwung zu bringen und institutionelle Grenzen zu verschieben. Schliesslich argumentiert die Analyse, dass diese Ökologie von Intensitäten ein affektives 'Commons' konstituiert, dass auf das ethisch-politische Potenzial von Kulturunternehmertum verweist.

Preface

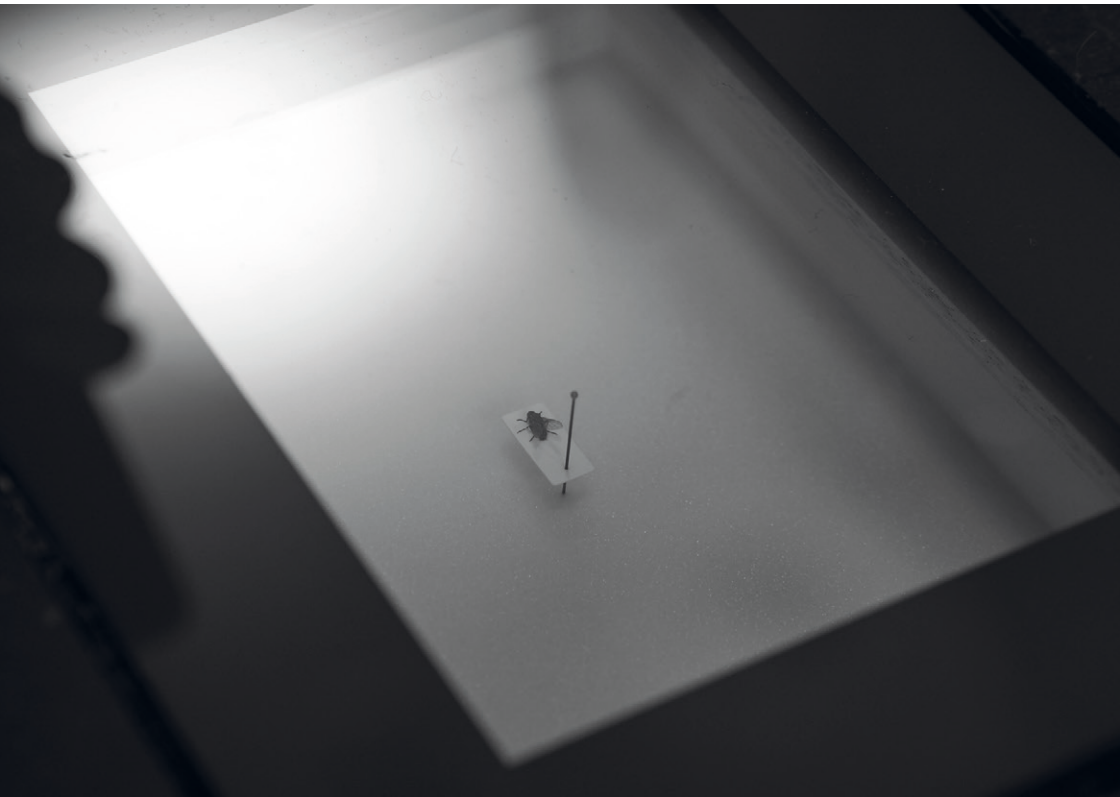
I stroll along the river of my hometown with my oldest friend, her husband and my goddaughter, taking a break from labouring over my analysis. As we trail through the forest, my friend and I reminisce about our last year of high school together. We laugh as we think back to the strenuous hours spent in the art room where we worked weekends and evenings on an exhibition on different facets of creativity, our final project. At some point, her husband turns to me: 'Funny, in a way, ten years later your research is still concerned with those very questions and topics that you explored then.' It is true, although in the meantime I have browsed vastly disparate academic disciplines such as biology, social science or cultural and organization theory, the themes of my research – my interest in art and creative processes and their role in society; in the politics of materiality, the body and space or my affinity for ecological and vitalist understandings of organizing – and my curiosity for both scientific and entrepreneurial processes have been weaving like threads through the backdrop and forefront of my life all along.

There is a saying that there are no real beginnings and endings in life, that we are always in the midst of things, entangled in the loose ends unravelled by life's strange ways. And in many respects, this PhD has been conjured as and from such a middle, knotting together those threads that have been running through my biography into a well textured net. And yet, while we are always in-between, never quite knowing where the forcefield of this interweaving of multiple pasts and potential futures is propelling us towards, sometimes we can make out an incipience. It is palpable as a quality that sneaks up on us, enfolding us in a new kind of intensity. I still remember one such inception very clearly: It was April 2015 and I was walking up the free hanging stairs in the main building on campus to work on my art project and my Master's thesis. As I was taking those steps that keep getting smaller and smaller, I had the strangest sensation. It was as though, briefly, my heartbeat was synchronizing with the algorithm of life and a sudden streak of possibility painted itself against the grey corners of the stairway. With a lightheaded rush, I reached the top of the staircase, squinting as I was trying to make out what just happened. It was the beginning of this PhD.


JVC

‘Erika, after a long journey and much media attention, you have finally settled in your new home. How do you feel?’
‘I am dead, but thanks for asking.’

Prisma, HSG student magazine **Q1**



1 Introduction: the shifting relations between art, business & society

17.12.2015. A knot of people is gathered around a little box that is lowered into a hole in the floor. In it is nothing but the dead body of a delicate insect attached to a little paper: the housefly Erika. She died roughly two years ago and today, in her glass sarcophagus, she will officially become part of the art collection of the University of St. Gallen. A considerable number of media representatives has come to document the laying to rest of 'the most expensive fly in the world', the camera gear of the national broadcasting company obstructing my view. Erika is the relic of an art performance that saved more than 900 flies and instigated an insecticide producer to turn his business model on its head, rescuing rather than killing insects. In media outlets, the portrayal of the performance is accompanied by an undertone of wonder, incomprehension and fascination. It is discussed at as an obscure marketing pun, but also as a thought-provoking ecological intervention. Amongst the students a debate around the value of the fly is sparked. Meanwhile the laudation on the campus emphasizes the fruitful intersection between art and business.

This brief story about the inauguration of the art performance *Fliegen retten in Deppendorf* [Saving flies in Deppendorf] into the art collection of the University of St. Gallen offers a beautiful glimpse into the transforming relations between art, business and society that constitute the backdrop and broader horizon of this research endeavour. It is a transformation that has already captivated me before I embarked on this research journey, when I was still organizing art interventions on the campus of the University of St. Gallen and hosting events that debated the changing configuration of contemporary art worlds as co-chair of the students art association. Or when I was writing my Master's thesis on music festivals in the studio space of the very art enterprise that conceptualized the art performance *Saving Flies in Deppendorf*. This art performance which shaped Erika into an icon was developed by two local artists in collaboration with an entrepreneur and insecticide producer who initially hired the art enterprise in search for an original, aesthetic and cheap way to promote his flytraps. The artwork and its eventual celebration in the art collection of a business school point to the dissolving boundaries and the closing gap between the artistic and economic sphere in post-industrial societies. In 2003, the Zurich University of Arts published the first Swiss creative and cultural economies report (Weckerle & Söndermann, 2003). In it, researchers discovered that the cultural diversity in

Switzerland was equally driven by both government funded and commercial sectors. The reports on the 'creative economies' that have followed since have emphasized the relevance of the cultural and creative industries (CCI), shining a light on their novelty producing capacity, complex value creation processes and modes of collaboration (Weckerle, Grand, Martel, Page, & Schmuki, 2018; Weckerle, Page, & Grand, 2016). Parallel to the growth of the CCI, the education of artists and creatives has become more diversified and entrepreneurial in an attempt equipping the future creative and artistic workforce with tools for their professional development in this budding but competitive employment field. The increasing public consciousness around the CCI as a valuable economic sector in Switzerland mirrors a broader international trend. Since 2012, the European Union has been making concerted efforts in supporting the CCI – fostering for instance the entrepreneurial competencies of young creatives through education and exchange programs. It underlines the importance of the CCI as drivers for innovation and job creation which act as a "catalyst for change in other sectors" and are more and more becoming a decisive component in almost every product and service (European Commission, 2012). Indeed, the insecticide producer and entrepreneur who collaborated with the artistic enterprise for the art performance Saving Flies in Deppendorf would eventually not only get an unconventional story and press campaign for his own business but go on to win sustainability, innovation and maverick awards for the bold strategic reorientation which is triggered by the joint venture with the art enterprise as he starts to reorganize his business towards insect biodiversity services.

Then again, the art performance is also an illustration of the shifting relations between contemporary art and society. Rather than taking place in a designated art space such as the gallery or the museum, the performance around the fly Erika is embedded in and intertwined with everyday organizational life. It intercepts with the inhabitants of the small village that help save the flies for the art performance, with the entrepreneur and his employees as they start to transform the company's relationships to insects or with me, as a student, being confronted by it when I walk past the fly on the university campus or hear about the story as it travels through different cultural and social spheres via texts, images and videos. Indeed, paradoxically from the moment that modern art has come to be understood as an autonomous social field, artistic work and practices have spilled over and influenced other social spheres (Beyes, 2016; Rancière, 2007). This tendency has been amplified in the past thirty years, with an ongoing and

pervasive aestheticization of society taking place, as different sociologists have noted. It incites our lives to unfold and take place in increasingly dense flows of symbols and signs, materialities and spaces designed to stimulate surprising and enjoyable sensory and affective feelings (Beyes & Holt, 2020; Reckwitz, 2017b). Labels such as the 'curatorial turn' (Balzer, 2014) or the 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 2011) point to this sprawling of the aesthetic in everyday organizational processes. It is palpable in the experiential landscapes of contemporary office spaces promoted by the likes of Google and Apple, in those social media platforms that continuously blur the boundaries between curating, sharing and influencing or in job profiles such as 'interaction designer' or 'content curator'. The field of contemporary art has also underpinned this development by spawning a proliferation of artistic experiments that have been breaching the conventions of traditional art mediums (Beyes, 2016). These experiments are radically multiplying the sites (streets, fields, squares, laboratories, conference centres, corporate headquarters, the Mediterranean Sea, the dark net), practices (protesting, mobilizing, planting, cooking, dissolving, composting) and materials (concepts, infrastructures, everyday objects, technological devices, landscapes, bodies, social processes) that artists engage with. They turn social relations, how they are organized and could be reorganized into an increasingly important focus of aesthetic production and inquiry, continuously blurring the boundaries between art and non-art (Beyes, 2016; Rancière, 2007). To be sure, never in modern times has there been as much art and never has art been as visible and present in society, finding ever new social and economic interstices to creep into and aestheticize (Menke, 2013).

Certainly, the aestheticization of society has not gone unnoticed by the cultural and social sciences, which in response have started to take a greater interest in the role of aesthetics in the organization of everyday social and cultural worlds. Cultural theorists in particular have highlighted how this 'age of aesthetic innovation' (Reckwitz, 2017b), is driven by the aesthetic as a 'modus operandi' that produces sensory-emotional experiences as well as collective and subjective involvements through affective atmospheres (Beyes, 2016). Moreover, they have underlined the important affective, material and spatial dimension of this process of aestheticization (Thrift, 2008). At the inauguration of Erika, the carefully groomed and materially staged body of the fly, for instance, interacts with the spatial aura of the university and its art collection, producing different affective intensities and engagements (astonishment, disbelief, excitement) in the people that participate in the event, hear about the performance

or stumble upon the artwork on a campus art tour (image 1). However, scholars have not only tried to unfold the different dimensions that enable and drive this process of aestheticization, but also examined with a critical eye the blurring boundaries between art, business and society. They carved out how the incorporation of 'artistic critique' and artistic practices into the organizational paradigm of aesthetic innovation has created new modes of (self-) exploitation under the disguise of an entrepreneurial pursuit of creativity and self-expression (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). Moreover, they have emphasized how its 'politics of the spectacle' is undercutting the radical potential of art and aesthetics to reflect and critique economy and society (Kompridis, 2014). At the same time, to my relief, academics have also pointed out that the idea of a pure, non-corrupted sphere of aesthetics in social and economic life is a rather strange one. Ultimately, it is the lingering of aesthetic capacities in our everyday lives that constitutes the prerequisite for moments and movements of transformation (Beyes, 2016). After all, "[t]ransforming social praxis implies changing what can be felt and experienced – a kind of rupture of sensation and affectivity that messes up seemingly self-evident correspondences between perception and signification" (Beyes, 2016, p. 122). This tension between different political capacities of the aesthetic also reverberates in the art performance around the fly Erika. On the one hand, commentators have wondered critically whether art is not becoming instrumentalized for marketing purposes in this art-business collaboration, undermining the integrity and radical stance of the art enterprise's work. On the other hand, the different sensible and affective relationships produced through the art performances also enabled the insecticide producer and others (including myself) to reexperience and reframe their own relationships to insects. Indeed, Erika has animated me to catch and release rather than kill the insects that are bothering me in my home. Contemporary social and cultural theory has thus highlighted an aspect of contemporary organizational life that I became more and more attuned to in the time prior to my PhD: Aesthetics as an increasingly prolific aspect of contemporary societies is intimately shaping the material, affective and critical-political territories of contemporary organizations.



Image 1. Insecticide Producer Dr. Reckhaus carries fly Erika to the art collection
Credits: Daniel Amman

1.1 Position of the study

Similarly, the aestheticization of social and economic life has also been registered by management and organization studies (MOS) to which I aim at contributing with my research. Antonio Strati (1999, 2010) has been one of the first to introduce aesthetics as a different lens for understanding organizational processes, building in particular on the work of German philosopher Alexander Gottlieb Baumgartner and the Neapolitan philosopher Giovan Battista Vico. His work on aesthetics has emphasized the corporeality of sensible knowledge, its modulation and engineering through symbols and artefacts as well as its creative potential (Beyes, 2016). The field of 'organizational aesthetics', which was established by Strati together with other scholars such as Guillet de Mothoux (2004, 2010) or Gagliardi (1999) not only highlighted the everyday sensible and perceptible dimension of organizational life and its materialization of worldviews. It also challenged the dominant focus of organization and management research on cognitive and discursive aspects of organizational processes by emphasizing the importance of materiality and the body and by applying 'aesthetico-intuitive' forms of

understanding to organizations (Strati, 1999; Strati & Guillet de Monthoux, 2002; Taylor & Hansen, 2005). More recently, organizational scholars have turned in particular to affect (Otto & Strauß, 2019; Pouthier & Sondak, 2019; Sage, Vitry, & Dainty, 2020), space (Beyes & Steyaert, 2012, 2013; De Molli, Mengis, & van Marrewijk, 2019) and vital materiality (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Duff & Sumartojo, 2017) to unfold the aesthetic dynamics of organizational processes, their bodily and material traces and political capacities. Likewise, the 'aesthetic turn' in management research has been picked up in entrepreneurship studies (Minahan & Cox, 2018), broadening contemporary understandings of entrepreneurial processes towards their material, sensible and affective dimensions, highlighting, for instance, how aesthetics allows entrepreneurs to move between multiple discursive logics, to navigate customer relations, or plays a part in staging entrepreneurial identities (Elias, Chiles, Duncan, & Vultee, 2018; Katila, Laine, & Parkkari, 2019; Poldner, Shrivastava, & Branzei, 2017; L. Warren & Anderson, 2010). It also helped carve out new layers of its political dimension (Hjorth & Steyaert, 2010; Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009). Meanwhile, there has also been a burgeoning field of research which focuses on the organizational processes that support and drive the CCI and their processes of aesthetic innovation, rather than studying aesthetic processes in organizations in more general. The special issue on 'Misfits, mavericks and mainstream: drivers of innovation in the creative industries' (Candace Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen, & Townley, 2016) in Organization Studies, for instance, unfolds from different angles the complex collaborative, entrepreneurial and organizational processes that are at the heart of aesthetic innovation in these proliferating and expanding art worlds (Becker, 2008). It emphasizes how actors in the CCI need to navigate the tensions between rebellion and freedom as well as legitimacy and accessibility, which organize creative work and shape the networks around artistic and aesthetic productions. Recent research has carved out in particular the role of relations (Daskalaki, 2010; Montanari, Scapolan, & Gianecchini, 2016), institutions (Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016; see also: Zhao, Ishihara, & Lounsbury, 2013) and social capitals (Power & Scott, 2004; M. Scott, 2012) in this process of aesthetic innovation. However, our knowledge of the role of materiality and affect in shaping this particular organizational arena is still underdeveloped and research around this topic is only starting to gain momentum. At the same time, critical research in management and organization studies also still grapples with the multiple and ambiguous political effects and capacities of the creative and cultural industries, their ability, for instance, to entrepreneurially 'reimagine new publics' or bring risk,

hybridity and irony to organizations (Hjorth, 2009; Beyes & Steyaert, 2006), but also micro-politically cement dominant power structures in their modes of production and representation (S. Warren & Rehn, 2006; Zanoni, Thoelen, & Ybema, 2017).

Building on the premise that the material and affective dimensions of aesthetics not only shape the reception but also the organization of the cultural and creative industries, my study aims at contributing to the ongoing conceptualization of the organizational processes and political capacities of the CCI, thus bringing recent conceptual developments in the field of organizational aesthetics to research on the CCI. I do this by tuning in on one particular organizational process: that of cultural entrepreneurship, and by drawing upon a particular conceptual lens: that of 'vital materialism' (J. Bennett, 2001, 2010). While I knew early on that I wanted to focus on organizational processes in the CCI in my PhD, I struggled for quite some time with the question from which theoretical and empirical angle I wanted to approach and frame those organizational processes in this research project. Would I be focusing on art-business collaborations, artistic spaces or art interventions in organizations? Eventually, I chose to look at the organizational processes in the CCI from the perspective of cultural entrepreneurship, thus entrepreneurship in the field of the CCI. This perspective seems particularly meaningful because the entrepreneurialisation of creative and cultural labour has become a key driver of the CCI and its regime of aesthetic innovation (Kolb, 2020; Lazzeretti & Vecco, 2018; Peris-Ortiz, Cabrera-Flores, & Serrano-Santoyo, 2019). In the last decade, in the wake of declining public subsidies for art and culture, cultural policies across the globe and in Europe have sought to foster the entrepreneurial orientation in cultural and creative workers, incentivizing them to contribute to and seize the opportunities that emerge from this ongoing aestheticization of business and society by adopting a form of 'strategic creativity' (Essig, 2017; Poettschacher, 2005). Moreover, the different tensions that pervade the process of aesthetic innovation, between commercial values and personal meaning, between aesthetic conventions and creative expression, and that need to be negotiated affectively and materially in the collaborative processes around aesthetic productions, surface particularly poignantly in the organization of cultural entrepreneurial processes. What is more, although research with a distinct focus on the material and affective dimensions of entrepreneurial processes in the CCI is still lacking, various research already hints at its importance (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Duff & Sumartojo, 2017; Elias, Chiles, Duncan & Vultee, 2018; Islam, Endrissat, & Noppeney, 2016).

This does not come as a surprise. After all, as I experienced time and again in my conversations with cultural entrepreneurs in both the field of music and visual arts, for most of them the affective relations to materiality are a key driver of their engagement with aesthetics, fundamentally structuring their orientation to and organization of work (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Hoedemaekers, 2018).

In the process of developing this research project, its research questions and analyses, I experimented with different brands of materialist and affect theory. Eventually, I settled for a vital materialist approach, which I will further explain in chapter 3. As a theoretical stream, it turned out to offer a particularly fruitful conceptual angle for unpacking the affective and material dimension of this process of aesthetic production and innovation because it allowed me to conceptualize and tune into the role of 'vital materiality', 'affective capacities' and 'porous bodies' and their interplay in the organization of sensible worlds (J. Bennett, 2010; Coole & Frost, 2010; Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015). Moreover, it highlights the critical political promise and agentic capacities of nonhumans and affective forces in shaping organizational processes and collective realities. This study thus will elaborate a vital materialist conceptualization of organizational processes in order to answer two research questions: How do materiality and affect inform and shape cultural entrepreneurial processes? And what part do materiality and affect play in articulating the (critical) political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship? To answer these two research questions, I eventually turned to the case of one particular art enterprise, the ‚Atelier für Sonderaufgaben' [studio for special tasks, AfS], which I followed along an 'affective ethnography' (Gherardi, 2019). I have actually already briefly introduced them to you in this chapter with the vignette and story of the art performance around the fly Erika, which is one particular artwork and project of the AfS. Of course, the study and results which I am going to unfold in the chapters that follow can only articulate partial answers and local epistemologies in response to those research questions. Nonetheless, the vital material model of entrepreneurial experimentation as well as the process of affective commoning which I map as central faults on the cartography of my research process and vital materialist exploration, so I hope, will not only contribute to a more profound understanding of the organizational processes that shape cultural production and aesthetic innovation, but also give us new a new insight into how the CCI potentially play a part in shaping the political topographies of contemporary societies.

1.2 Outline of the study

In the next chapters, I will present or, as I will later call it, 'presence' the research cartography which has emerged from this PhD project. As presenting research always implies a form of storytelling, we explore this cartography along the research tale which I have carefully crafted over the past months and years. This tale will take us to different places on this cartography and at the same time articulate a story that emphasizes particular layers of its topography, 'cutting' in a very specific way through the realities that I have encountered, analysed and eventually produced in the process. Along the way the flow of this tale is interrupted and complicated through a series of images, clips, quotes, stories and vignettes (at times embedded virtually via QR code). As multimodal devices, they aim to lend another layer of richness and texture, evoking thoughts, images, experiences, rhythms and little narratives that are part of the hinterland of this research, yet somehow got weeded out of its main story (Calás & Smircich, 1999; Meyer, Höllerer, Jancsary, & van Leeuwen, 2013; Steyaert, Marti, & Michels, 2012). At the same time, these interruptive devices also invite the reader to roam a little bit beyond the research tale, to strobe its fringes and imagine the lines of flight that point beyond it. But now let me outline the thread of the tale:

In chapter 2 'Cultural entrepreneurship and the production of art worlds', we will explore in more depth how the rise of the so-called aesthetic capitalism has articulated cultural entrepreneurship as a new trope of entrepreneuring. I suggest that cultural entrepreneurship is driven by the motivation to create more opportunities for navigating the collaborative networks that constitute those expanding art worlds as well as by the emancipatory strive to overcome certain constraints in these realities. I then point out that we still know little about how material and affective relations play a part in the way cultural entrepreneurship creates novelty, produces legitimacy and navigates boundaries. Moreover, I emphasize that materiality and affect also offer a new inroad for exploring its critical-political potential.

In chapter 3 'A vital materialist perspective on cultural entrepreneuring' we then delve into the theoretical realms of vital materialism, which allow us to conceptualize those material and affective relations of cultural entrepreneurship and its critical-political underpinnings. I will first map actor-network theory, new feminist materialism, more-than-representational theory and practice approaches as four vibrating theoretical

streams that offer rich inroads for studying vital material processes in organization studies. I then go on to elaborate my own take on vital materialism, which conceptualizes entrepreneurial processes as agentic assemblages and emphasizes the body as a porous body-subject that is affected as it encounters and moves with an ecology of other humans and nonhumans.

In chapter 4 'Inquiring artistic entrepreneurship: research design and affective methodology', we tour the methodological front stages and hinterlands that emerged as I crafted this research design around a vital materialist onto-epistemology. I introduce the artistic enterprise 'Atelier für Sonderaufgaben' as the main case which I followed to generate data for examining the sociomaterial processes that move cultural entrepreneurial assemblages and the affective capacities that sustain those assemblages as particular ecologies of encounter. Then I map out affective ethnography as a style of doing affective research which guided me during my fieldwork and attunement, during my analytic dance and evocative writing process.

In chapter 5 'Cultural entrepreneurship through experimentation: (re)assembling sociomateriality', we follow and unravel the entrepreneurial trajectory of the AfS and one of its main projects, the *zero star hotel*. Doing that, I argue that cultural entrepreneurial assemblages move and sustain by articulating and organizing themselves into an 'experimental system'. I then go on to analyse the microdynamics of this process of entrepreneurial experimentation which allows the experimental system to navigate agency and constraint, and suggest a vital materialist model of entrepreneurial experimentation. Finally, I argue that the cultural entrepreneurial process of experimentation through articulating different human-nonhuman entanglements re-matters reality and reconfigures the systems of 'self-others-things' that organize our everyday lives.

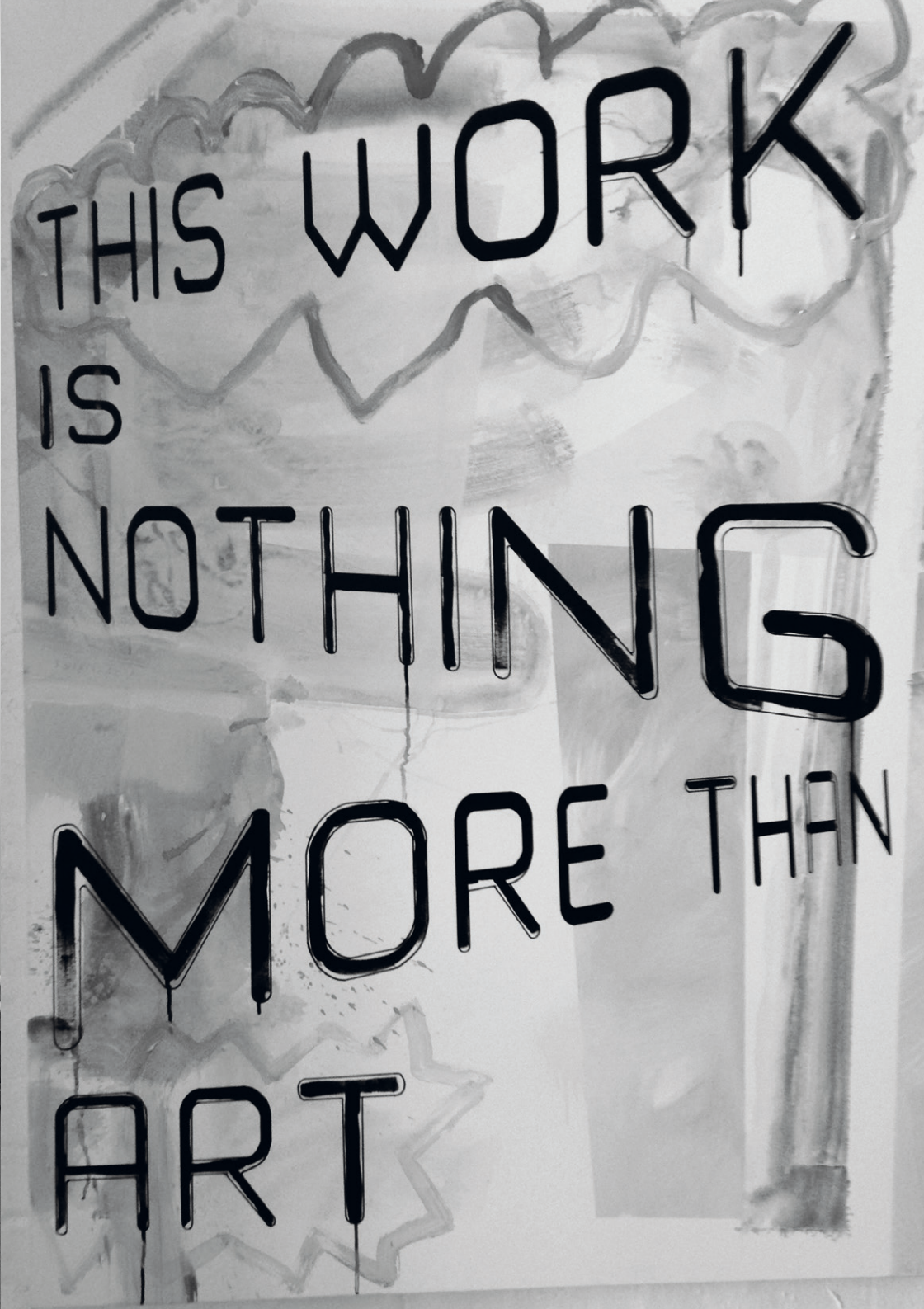
In chapter 6 'Cultural entrepreneuring as ecology of intensities: affecting bodies', we then tune into the *BIGNIK* project as an affective ecology of encounters. I first analyse how the project articulates an ecology of resonating intensities by enacting ecological couplings around agentic materiality, rhythmic time and rhizomatic collectivity. I then go on to carve out four affective tactics: opening, articulating, attuning and opposing, which the entrepreneurial process draws upon to continuously shape the affective capacities of bodies towards (re)coupling to and sustaining this ecology of intensities

and its sociomaterial order. Ultimately, I argue that this ecology of intensities represents an 'affective commons' that produces different collectively shared and fostered affective relations.

In chapter 7 'New perspectives on the processes and politics of cultural entrepreneurship', I then discuss the results of those two analyses and the contributions they make to current debates in the literature. I argue on the one hand that both the model of entrepreneurial experimentation and the interplay of affective tactics articulate a new understanding of the processual and relational dynamics that allow cultural entrepreneurship to articulate, innovate and transform art worlds and society. On the other hand, I also emphasize how a vital materialist perspective gives us the opportunity to consider from a new angle the critical-political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in more general by pointing towards its 'onto-political' and 'ethico-political' dimension, and by unravelling its ambiguous capacities of 'commoning'.

Finally, in the conclusion, I reflect once more upon this research cartography which I have presenced over the past chapters and on the complexity and fragility of the process of producing this knowledge. I highlight its timeliness in the wake of a global health pandemic that has severely impacted the CCI, while also pointing to the limitations and boundary conditions that are entangled with the specificity and socio-historic situatedness of the research context. Eventually, I also discuss the roadmap which such a vital materialist approach offers to cultural entrepreneurship and organization studies more broadly for (re)imagining and experimenting with the research and organizing of the future.


Frank und Patrik Riklin, CEO Atelier für Sonderaufgaben
THE CHANGING ROLE OF ARTISTS IN SOCIETY
Postmysteriöse Reflexionen zur Kunst ausserhalb des ordentlichen Kunstbetriebs
04.02 HASSELT (B), Muziekodroom
14.04 FLORENZ (I), Giardino di Boboli
27.04 ZÜRICH (CH), Prime Tower, Hotel Rivington
13.05 ZÜRICH (CH), Hardau Hochhäuser
15.05 BASEL (CH), Parkhaus City
20.09 WIEN (AT), Museumsquartier
23.05 MAASTRICHT (NL), Week of Entrepreneurship
31.05 ST. GALLEN (CH), Taubenloch
01.06 BERLIN (D), Maxfabrik
05.06 ST. GALLEN (CH), Freudenberg
08.06 ZÜRICH (CH), Hunziker-Areal
14.06 LUZERN (CH), Europaplatz
22.08 DEPPENDORF (D), Feuerwehrgerätehaus
17.10 LOS ANGELES (USA), Hollywood Hills
more information under www.sonderaufgaben.ch
AFS-TOUR 2012


THIS WORK
IS
NOTHING
MORE THAN
ART

Frank checks the time on his cell phone while Patrik flicks pensively through their well-orchestrated pitch presentation: ‘Strange, really strange’. Sorting once more through the email exchange, Frank frowns: ‘We definitely said today at one o’clock – it must have slipped their mind’ and stares into the empty room. He throws a glance at me and sighs: ‘As I always say, not everybody is an artist.’



① WIE MACHT DEIN UNTERNEHMEN SEINE MITARBEITER ZU DIGITALEN VORREITERN

② MIT WELCHEN DIGITALEN ERLEBNISSEN BEGEISTERT DEIN UNTERNEHMEN SEINE KUNDEN?

③ WIE FORCIERT DEIN UNTERNEHMEN PRODUKT- & SERVICE INNOVATION?

Was ist aktuell Deine größte Herausforderung?

Was macht für Dich eine erfolgreiche Zusammenarbeit aus.



2 Cultural entrepreneurship and the production of art worlds

In this second chapter, I ground my research in the current academic discussions on cultural entrepreneurship in management and organization studies (MOS) as well as in cultural sociology, cultural geography and art theory, which have also contributed to the contemporary understanding of cultural entrepreneurship. I carve out how my study contributes to ongoing debates in the field and addresses gaps in our current understanding of entrepreneurial and organizational processes in the CCI. In section 2.1, I first discuss how the rise of the CCI and the thriving of what some call 'aesthetic capitalism' has articulated a new trope entrepreneurship, that of 'cultural entrepreneurship' (Reckwitz, 2017b). I elaborate how this new trope of entrepreneurship operates differently from conventional entrepreneurship and at the same time also challenges some of the assumptions that still haunt much entrepreneurship research: that entrepreneurial processes are predominantly economically driven and growth-oriented. In section 2.2, I dive deeper into recent research on entrepreneurship in the CCI and underline that cultural entrepreneurship is driven especially by the motivation to create more opportunities for navigating the complex collaborative networks that produce art worlds and their margins. I discuss how cultural entrepreneurs need to navigate the tension between pursuing their own creative visions and staying intelligible within the conventions of a certain art field in order to get access to those collaborative networks and their resources. In section 2.3, building on this insight, I then carve out how institutional, Bourdieuan and interpretative frameworks currently dominate our understanding of how entrepreneurial processes navigate agency and constraint in the collaborative networks of these art worlds and argue for the importance of material and affective dimensions in understanding how (cultural) entrepreneurship creates novelty, produces legitimacy and navigates boundaries in the realm of art but also in society more broadly. Eventually, in section 2.4, I offer a critical reading of the political underpinnings of contemporary cultural entrepreneurship and emphasize that a focus on the material and affective dimensions also allows us to revisit and rethink current understandings of the politics of cultural entrepreneurship. I then briefly summarize this chapter by carving out the main research questions that I derive from these debates in the literature and that guide my project.

2.1 The new trope of cultural entrepreneurship

As I have noted in the introduction, the cultural and creative industries (CCI) have been thriving over the last decades. According to a study conducted by EY in 2015 on behalf of the Unesco (Lhermitte, Perrin, & Blanc, 2015), the CCI generate a revenue of 2250 billion US Dollars globally and are responsible for the employment of about 1% of the world population. While definitions regarding what belongs to the CCI complex vary across countries and regions, they include sectors such as fashion, architecture, game design, advertising, media, film, print, music, visual and performance art (Cunningham & Flew, 2019). In Switzerland, like in many other Western countries, the CCI are growing at a higher rate than the overall economy, the number of businesses having grown significantly faster between 2013 and 2015, namely by 6.4% compared to 1.9% in the overall economy (Weckerle, Grand, Martel, Page & Schmuki, 2018). Sociologists and cultural theorists trace this rise of the CCI back to an increasing 'aestheticization' of contemporary society and its economic counterpart: 'aesthetic capitalism' (Böhme, 2017; Raunig, 2013; Reckwitz, 2017b), a form of capitalism that is driven through the consumption and production of affectively charged symbols, narrations, images and performances. Already in the 1990s, Pine and Gilmore (2011 [1999]) coined the by now notorious expression of the 'experience economy' to frame how experiences as new forms of economic offerings are revolutionising the current functioning of capitalism and will be the basis for revenue and growth in the future. They demonstrated how the market of experience is growing (e.g. tourism, leisure, sports, culture) and how experiences have successfully made their way into various traditional industries up to a point where today, they form a whole new industry sector: the CCI. In his genealogical analysis of this new age of aesthetic innovation, the German sociologist Reckwitz (2017b) links the process of this socio-economic transformation not only to the logics of economic prosperity, but also to the affective capacities of aesthetic and experiential goods. He points out how aesthetic perceptions and experiences mediated through objects, situations or atmospheres create an affective involvement of the subject and therefore a specific form of sensual bodily experience and arousal. In premodern times, religious rituals and political engagements were important social clusters enabling such affective experiences (Reckwitz, 2017b). However, according to Reckwitz, modernity's tendency to rationalize every day and organizational life and the post-modern breaking away of the grand narratives of progress and enlightenment

have reduced the affective potential of these ancient clusters. Thus, aesthetic capitalism presents itself as a response to the perceived lack for such spaces and opportunities of affective engagement while commodifying it. What matters in this new capitalism, as Massumi (2010) assesses, is not the mere possession of goods, but their potential for experience and connection, their ability to expand one's own affective capabilities and open up to new bodily states.

This rise of the CCI is closely intertwined with two other contemporary socio-economic developments. For one, the CCI drive the digital economy, which has developed not least around the creative and aesthetic contents produced by the various sectors of the CCI (Towse & Handka, 2013). Digital creative and cultural goods are the biggest revenue source for the digital economy and shape consumption patterns towards engagement, personalization and community (Lhermitte, Perrin & Blanc, 2015). The digitalized CCI drive new modes of co-creative labour, which continuously blur the boundaries between production and consumption into forms of 'prosumption' or 'produsage' (Banks & Deuze, 2009; Bruns, 2013; Parmentier & Mangematin, 2014) and articulate new business models such as AirBnB (Martel, 2018). At the same time, they also reinforce the problematic nature of so called 'free labour' on which the content driven virtual sphere often thrives (Hesmondhalgh, 2010), and bring forward new legal challenges in an attempt to protect creators and their work (Flew, 2005; McKenzie, 2020; Waldvogel, 2020). Second, the CCI are also a significant force propelling urban and regional development (Go & Lemmetyinen, 2015; Innerhofer, Pechlaner, & Borin, 2018; Peris-Ortiz, Cabrera-Flores & Serrano-Santoyo, 2019). In his influential book 'The Rise of the Creative Class', Richard Florida (2004) has suggested that the economic success of cities or regions is dependent on their creative workforce (artists as well as scientists and other educated people). According to him creating an attractive urban environment for the creative class should be a key goal for urban development, promoting growth as well as attractiveness (Lhermitte, Perrin, & Blanc, 2015). Florida's work fuelled the culturalization of cities, where spectacular architectures, atmospheric neighbourhoods, cultural heritage, events and activities are becoming important tools in urban and regional planning to invigorate interesting, exciting and differentiated urban 'experiencescapes' (Beyes, Metelmann, & Born, 2018; Hall & Page, 2012; Page & Connell, 2012b; Reckwitz, 2017b). The CCI thus are an increasingly important factor in giving cities (or regions) a 'competitive edge' in this new and global 'geography

of the spectacle' (Hall & Page, 2012; Page & Connell, 2012a). They are fostered and drawn upon to support the 'imagineering' of place (Go & Lemmetyinen, 2015; Steyaert & Beyes, 2009) in order to transform urban landscapes into "innovative, exciting, creative and safe places to live and visit, to play and consume in" (Steyaert & Beyes, 2009, p. 212). They are, as Thrift (2008) calls it, 'affectively engineered' to attract the creative workforce and curious tourists who will dynamize the local economy with their spending (Page & Connell, 2012b). The organization of aesthetic goods has thus become an ever more important part of contemporary Western (and other) economies, reflecting the growing importance of the knowledge based industries (Albinsson, 2017; Cunningham & Flew, 2019). Moreover, the affective dimensions of this new capitalism is critically acknowledged and discussed within MOS (Karppi, Kähkönnen, Mannevuo, Pajala, & Sihvonen, 2016). Yet, the exploration of the role of affective forces, sensible bodies and materiality in the organization of this aesthetic capitalism is only just emerging as a more distinct research avenue in MOS (Beyes, 2016). This is where I would like to make a contribution with this research project.

In order to do so, I turn to the process and phenomenon of cultural entrepreneurship. The various research agendas that map the rise and importance of the CCI (Cunningham & Flew, 2019) and explore the subject in a growing number of books and handbooks (Innerhofer, Pechlaner & Borin., 2018; Towse & Hernandez, 2020) all emphasize the importance of this new trope of entrepreneurship, which is originating in the budding aesthetic capitalism. The 'culturpreneur' (Lange, 2007, 2009) or 'cultural entrepreneurship' (Blaug & Ruth Towse, 2020; Hausmann & Heinze, 2016, 2017; M. Scott, 2012) are sought to drive the CCI and foster them as a central pillar of the digital economy and regional economic development (Lazzeretti & Vecco, 2018). It is thus a valuable entry point for tracing and zooming into the affective and material organization of the CCI. Cultural entrepreneurship as a notion was first coined by Dimaggio (1982) in his historic study on the emergence of high culture institutions, such as the Boston Symphony Orchestra. Since 2002, publications which try to trace and frame entrepreneurial activities in the field of the CCI have increased, articulating other notions such as 'creative entrepreneurship' or 'art entrepreneurship'. They constitute a vibrating semantic field around a new form of entrepreneurial activity and a different mode of entrepreneuring (Hausmann & Heinze, 2016). As some scholars note, the distinction between 'art entrepreneurship', 'creative entrepreneurship' and 'cultural entrepreneurship' in these scholarly debates is blurry. However, Essig (2017)

points out that art entrepreneurship is the more narrowly construed notion and more prevalent in the US, while cultural entrepreneurship as a term is predominantly used in Europe and Australia and frequently also includes topics in the realm of cultural and arts management. The empirical case of this study could also be framed as art entrepreneurship. Nevertheless, I will inscribe my research into the European tradition by using the notion of cultural entrepreneurship. I do this for one because cultural entrepreneurship is the broader term and also the notion that is already better linked to debates in entrepreneurship studies and MOS in general. Second, the discussions which are linked to cultural entrepreneurship more strongly reflect the European policy context in which my research is embedded and which has fuelled this form of entrepreneurship – this being the rise of neoliberal cultural policy which since the 1990s has substantially reduced government subsidies for cultural institutions and the arts and incentivised the marketization of culture and art through the CCI (Ellmeier, 2003; Essig, 2017). What these two notions have in common is the idea that creative, cultural and artistic entrepreneurship is organized around the realization of cultural rather than just economic value (Klamer, 2011; M. Scott, 2012), producing goods and services that are mainly of aesthetic or symbolic value (Smit, 2011). The semantic plurality of this new field of entrepreneurship goes hand in hand with the plurality of institutional and governance structures characterizing the different sectors of the CCI, such as the music industry, press, advertising, broadcasting, design, film, performance or art industry, as well as different commercial models and relations to government (and other) funding bodies. In general, it can be said that the CCI have particularly high rates of self-employed workers (Essig, 2017; Oakley, 2014). Like elsewhere in Switzerland, the vast majority (meaning 94%) of the businesses, are so called micro-businesses operating with ten or fewer employees, three quarters only consisting of one or two people (Weckerle, Grand, Martel, Page & Schmuki, 2018).

In this broader notion and European tradition, cultural entrepreneurship is sometimes framed around 'visionaries' and 'change-agents' in the cultural sectors (Ardahaey, Kiasi, Shahhosseini, & Kavousy, 2010; Enhuber, 2014; Rentschler, 2002), probably tapping into and mirroring the heroic narrative that tends to surround entrepreneurship in the broader academic and public debate (Ahl, 2004; Hamilton, 2013; Campbell Jones & Spicer, 2005; Ogbor, 2000). I, however, will follow in my understanding of cultural entrepreneurship researchers such as Oakley (2014, p. 145), who argue that cultural entrepreneuring encompasses "aspects of self-employment, freelancing and portfolio

working, as well as the more 'conscious' entrepreneurship of those who set up small business within the cultural sector and seek to either work alone, or employ others as they grow". Oakley highlights that for many, turning entrepreneurial is an adaptive strategy rather than a choice: cultural entrepreneurs turn entrepreneurial because it is the easiest way to carry out their practice. They are "innovative people who have no choice but to be entrepreneurial" (Bilton, 2014, p. 94). This is supported by Fréderic Martel's (2018) essay on the business strategies of artists, which emphasizes how artists in the wake of neoliberal cultural policies and declining public funding increasingly turn entrepreneurial, creating legal structures that transform them into 'start-uppers'. This legal status, facilitated by the global 'democratization' of entrepreneurship, allows them to invoice and monetize their activities as much as apply for subsidies and other funding and deduct their expenses from taxes. Oakley wonders whether the label entrepreneurship is really fit for such 'forced' entrepreneurs who pursue entrepreneurship out of a different set of motivations than those traditionally associated with the label: a desire for autonomy and creativity, rather than money, and often struggle to balance their organizational mission with economic concerns (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010; Swedberg, 2006; Wilson & Stokes, 2004). Nevertheless, for better or worse, many of those cultural entrepreneurs appear to embrace their entrepreneurial status, referring proudly to their own 'brand' or 'venture' (Weckerle, Grand, Martel, Page & Schmuki, 2018). Oakley's scepticism towards entrepreneurship as a label for these economic and organizational activities in the field of the CCI makes sense. At first glance, much of what seems to characterize cultural entrepreneurship seems to be at odds with conventional understandings of entrepreneurship: for instance, its focus on aesthetic, symbolic and cultural rather than commercial value or its frequent lack of growth orientation. Nevertheless, I would argue that there is merit to the notion of cultural entrepreneurship, not least because it helps us rearticulate and broaden our understanding of entrepreneurship more generally.

Indeed, while Dacin, Dacin & Matear (2010) in their discussion of different domains of entrepreneurship distinguish cultural entrepreneurship from other forms of entrepreneuring such as social, institutional and conventional entrepreneurship, they also point out that the boundaries between these types of entrepreneurship are anything but clear. Companies which are discussed and celebrated as model cases for conventional entrepreneurship in the literature (such as Freitag or Patagonia) could just as well be framed as social or cultural enterprises. The struggles faced

by cultural enterprises, such as maintaining authenticity and artistic integrity while securing economic resources (Beverland, 2005; Candace Jones, Anand, & Alvarez, 2005), and the strategies they apply such as leveraging social networks (M. Scott, 2012) and building legitimacy (Wilson & Stokes, 2004) bear many resemblances to those of social, institutional or conventional entrepreneurs (Dacin, Dacin & Matear, 2010). By researching cultural entrepreneurship, I can thus not only contribute to a better understanding of the organizational processes, which constitute and drive the CCI, but also support the increasing research efforts which attempt to challenge some of the assumptions dominating the mainstream literature on entrepreneurship. Already, the field of entrepreneurship studies is becoming more receptive to the idea that despite the mainstream literature's focus on wealth creation as the primary driver of entrepreneurial endeavours, much – one could even say most – entrepreneurship (even conventional entrepreneurship) is propelled by more than purely economic goals (Baker & Welter, 2017; Dacin, Dacin & Matear, 2010; Steyaert & Katz, 2004). As it is, the business side of entrepreneurship not seldom feels like a means to an end or even a constraint rather than a passionate aim to the entrepreneurs involved, something more of an afterthought that they are forced to take into account if they want to keep going (Baker & Welter, 2017; Roscoe, Cruz, & Howorth, 2013). Aspirations for more autonomy and agency than what is granted in the conventional political and economic institutions, for personal development and achievement, for creating a legacy or change, but also a necessity to maneuver around various restrictions (be it gender, ethnicity, religion, or class) seem to be at the forefront of many entrepreneurial initiatives no matter their sector or industry (A. R. Anderson, Dodd, & Jack, 2012; Baker & Welter, 2017; Garcia-Lorenzo, Donnelly, Sell-Trujillo, & Imas, 2018; Imas, Wilson, & Weston, 2012; Rindova, Barry, & Ketchen, 2009; Welter, Baker, Audretsch, & Gartner, 2017). Second, as Dacin, Dacin & Matear (2010) and others emphasize: All forms of entrepreneurship (conventional, cultural, social and institutional) revolve around change, newness and deviation from dominant patterns in societies or communities (Lindgren & Packendorff, 2009). Hence, they all have to deal with and face resistance to change. Rindova, Barry & Ketchen (2009) have therefore suggested to understand entrepreneuring as a process of emancipation, whereby entrepreneurs struggle to overcome constraints in the realities they are concerned with, challenging the existing 'status quo' by enacting and imagining "the future as a space in which new knowledge, new ethics and new actions are being projected" (Montesano Montessori,

2016, p. 542). For cultural entrepreneurs, change often implies inventing new modes of aesthetic production, new forms of meaning, engaging with new audiences, but also reconfiguring the roles, relations and locations of art and culture. Precisely because monetary concerns often are not the main goal in cultural entrepreneurship, it might also give us valuable insights into the dynamics and challenges implied in unfolding this emancipatory capacity of entrepreneurship.

2.2 Entrepreneurship and the production of art worlds

If cultural entrepreneurs do not turn entrepreneurial for the sake of profit or growth and often embrace their entrepreneurial configuration more out of necessity than as a deliberate choice, it opens up the question what drives those entrepreneurial processes in the CCI. I argue that cultural entrepreneurs turn entrepreneurial because it allows them to better navigate the complex collaborative networks that constitute what the American sociologist Howard Becker (1974, 2008) has coined the 'art worlds'. With art worlds Becker denotes the networked communities which organize artistic as well as cultural production and consumption in a collaborative interplay of different organizations, intermediaries, agents, gatekeepers, creators, audiences and consumers. In the age of accelerated 'aesthetic innovation' (Reckwitz, 2017b) these art worlds and their margins are expanding well beyond the traditional field of art (Beyes, 2016), articulating new opportunities and inviting different organizational players into the networked organization of aesthetic labour and artistic practices. Becoming entrepreneurial is embraced with more or less enthusiasm by creators and artists not only because it is fuelled by those neoliberal cultural policies that drive the commercialization of culture, but also because it grants them more ownership and control over their creative work and less dependency on the respective gatekeepers and state subsidies (Martel, 2018). Furthermore, it allows them to better seize and access the multiplicity of opportunities opening up around the burgeoning field of the CCI. Indeed, statistics from the Department of Labor and the U.S. federal censuses between 1999 and 2014 suggest that there are not only more registered artists, but that they also make slightly more money. After all, many traditional industries start taking an interest in the modes of organizing, producing and innovating propelled by the CCI. Notions such as 'soft innovation' (Eltham, 2013; Jaaniste, 2009; Stoneman, 2010) or 'hidden innovation' (Cunningham, 2013) try to broaden the concept of innovation

so that it can account for processes that go beyond its classic commercial and economic understanding to encompass artistic, intellectual or aesthetic modes of innovating such as those promoted by the CCI. Many companies in traditional sectors seek out closer collaboration with the CCI, are more willing to the engage with art and embrace artists in the role of contributors, consultants or provocateurs (Wilk, 2016). Microsoft started its own artist-in-residence program in 2013, inviting a renowned digital artist into Studio 99, a creative space founded about a year earlier to inspire the merging of art and research within the company's most experimental arm (O'Herron, 2017). CERN followed with its own program in 2016 (Lewis, 2016) and the biggest retail company in Switzerland, Migros is considering to set one up. Artists are invited to transform and intervene in the spatial settings of companies (or contribute to their already remarkable art collections) in order to create aesthetic and inspiring working settings (Conzen, Ritterskamp, & Salié, 2017; Lehmann & Marzahn, 2017). Or businesses like the fashion brands Burberry or Hermès work together with artists to give their marketing campaigns the latest edge (Koronaki, Kyrousi, & Panigyrakis, 2018), or to develop new experiential concept stores that mimic and celebrate contemporary art institutions (Joy, Wang, Chan, Sherry, & Cui, 2014). At the end of the day, concepts such as design thinking or co-working, which have infiltrated the tech start-up scene as much as the insurance and banking sector, are an example of how some of the practices and processes that inform and shape the CCI are being adopted (and maybe also co-opted) by other industries.

Yet, finding a sustainable business model remains challenging for many entrepreneurs and entrepreneurial initiatives in the CCI. As I have already discussed previously, for most of them success is not (solely) framed in monetary terms. Rather it is centred around their venture's capacity to create and establish attractive and relevant aesthetics, new meaning and cultural norms or identification with communities and social goals. Cultural entrepreneurship often organizes and fosters intangible goods such as ideas, values, community or placeness as much as and next to more traditional services and products; not knowing whether ideas are to be pursued 'for profit' or 'non-profit', 'public' or 'private', and consciously trying to blur those boundaries (Weckerle, Page & Grand, 2016). Hence, the activities of cultural enterprises often operate at the porous and fragile intersection between creating commercialisable cultural goods, being a (non-profit) start-up and a change-project backed up by contemporary political movements (Dey & Mason, 2018; Lounsbury, Cornelissen, Granqvist, & Grodal, 2019;

Lounsbury & Glynn, 2019; Sundin & Tillmar, 2008). Despite the budding genre of 'how to'-literature in the field of cultural entrepreneurship (see for instance: Kolb, 2020) and an expanding entrepreneurship curriculum at art schools (Carey & Naudin, 2006), most cultural entrepreneurs lack clear-cut economic and organizational templates of how to do 'business'. At the same time, many initiatives and organizations in the CCI with their emancipatory streak are keen to look for alternative models, strategies and perspectives to think and forge economic realities and often try to oppose the commodification of culture (Weckerle, Page & Grand, 2016). Martel (2018) coined the term of the 'slash/artist' to capture the hybridity of the business constellations characteristic for many contemporary cultural micro-enterprises (Essig, 2017; see also: M. Scott, 2012). Cultural entrepreneurs often operate in several creative fields – calling themselves artists / entrepreneurs / storytellers / designers / producers / change makers / publishers / video directors etc. for their professional identity. They operate as creators of art and content, as consultants, teachers and inspirers, organizing their work around a series of different projects and 'gigs'. On the one hand, this hybridity reflects the multiplication of income sources (and opportunities) in the industry and is in itself also not a new phenomenon. Artists and creators have long been known to pursue several and at times also unrelated activities to make a livelihood. DaVinci for instance branched into the military, commercial and urban spheres to increase his remunerated activity and pay for his assistants (see for instance: Martel, 2018). On the other hand, it mirrors the increasingly blurry boundaries and project-based organization of the realm of the artistic and the aesthetic, which infiltrates ever new corners of society and economy, continuously blending different forms of knowledge, techniques and skills.

The majority of enterprises in the cultural sector are so-called micro-enterprises often containing no more than a handful of people. Yet, in line with Howard Becker's (1974, 2008) depiction of creative work in the art worlds as collective action which is centered on interaction and collaboration (Candace Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen & Townley, 2016), research emphasizes cultural entrepreneurship as a collective accomplishment and distributive process rather than an individual performance (Acheson, Maule, & Filleul, 1996; Dimaggio, 1982; Gehman & Soublière, 2017; Navis & Glynn, 2010). Instead of operating on their own, those micro-cultural enterprises create and work through flexible and distributed networks which are constantly reassembled for the pursuit of different projects and modes of innovating (Weckerle, Grand, Martel, Page

& Schmuki, 2018). Cultural entrepreneurship is thus a dynamic process that involves various 'field participants' such as audiences or consumers, creators and producers as well as intermediaries and gatekeepers to create a "novel combination that results in something new and appreciated in the cultural sphere" (Swedberg, 2006, p. 260). It articulates "cultural entrepreneurship as a constitutive process in which entrepreneurship, opportunities, and contexts are mutually implicated even as the entrepreneurial journey unfolds" (Gehman & Soublière, 2017, p. 66). Relationships and networks are central to mobilizing support for new ideas and projects. Scott (2012) for instance, researching DIY music producers in New Zealand, emphasizes the importance of social networks, or in a Bourdieuan framing, social capital, for accessing "collaborators, customers and employees" (Power & Scott, 2004, p. 6), and argues that emerging and established cultural entrepreneurs move and uphold a complex 'economy of favours' that allows them to access services and resources without substantial economic capital. Montanari, Scapolan and Gianecchini (2016), exploring the work of the Italian choreographer Mauro Bigonzetti, carve out how changing relational dynamics (in the form of strong and weak ties) with other organizations of the field drive artistic innovation. Artists and cultural entrepreneurs, they argue, engage in relational work and oscillate between different types of networks to develop and implement their ideas. Bonding closely with organizations allows them to access important resources and to establish a trusting platform to experiment while developing new collaborations gives them access to a wider range of knowledge and stimuli.

In building and organizing those networks, cultural entrepreneurs navigate a dilemma typical for artists: They are interested in expression, freedom, imagination and transgression, yet they must balance their creativity with the social acceptability of their work and the conventions dominating the field in which they operate, so that they can acquire the resources necessary to develop their enterprise, their careers and gain recognition (Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016). In his analysis of art worlds Becker (1974, 2008) carves out three positions which artists or cultural entrepreneurs can take up with regards to the conventions of the their respective field: 'mainstream', 'maverick' and 'misfit'. Mainstreams according to Becker are 'integrated professionals' which have been trained in and perform according to the conventions. This provides them with greater access to resources, makes it easier to produce and distribute their works, and facilitates endorsement of these works by critics and audiences (Patriotta

& Hirsch, 2016). Mavericks are creators who have been trained within the industry and who on some level "feel constrained in their work by existing conventions and embark on challenging some of them, while keeping others […]" (Candace Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen & Townley, 2016, p. 755). They introduce new practices to the industry while adhering to some conventions in order to stay intelligible and accessible for collaborations. They therefore can be read as 'tempered radicals' who try to rock the boat without leaving it (Meyerson, 2001; Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016), thus operating as institutional entrepreneurs "who are able to defy established conventions through the development of roles, partnerships and organizations that support their artistic production" (Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016, p. 870; see also: Svejenova, Mazza, & Planellas, 2007). 'Misfits', finally, are outsiders who struggle to mobilize collaborators from the existing art worlds. They are 'rule-breakers' who defy the dominant rules in the field and have more freedom to pursue other processes and modes of expression while usually staying disconnected and exotic in relation to their industry and thus struggling to promote their work. Often, they are inspired by radical ideas that question the status quo. As many of them are self-taught, their originality draws from the lack of internalization of practices and standards which professional artists are subjected to. In order to influence the 'core' of their respective art worlds, they need to be discovered or find support from intermediaries with legitimacy and connections to the 'mainstream'. Patriotta and Hirsch (2016) add a fourth category inspired by Powell & Sandholtz (2012), that of the 'amphibious' entrepreneur or artist. 'Amphibians' are artists or cultural entrepreneurs who manage to create bridges and move between 'insider' and 'outsider' positions. They are often successful in inspiring others to dare and bringing together different types of creators.

While Becker's (2008) positional model is rather static, Patriotta and Hirsch (2016) emphasize the dynamic nature of those positions. Amateur artists or cultural entrepreneurs might in the beginning of their career work in the mainstream because they lack resources to then later turn maverick, while 'misfits' might move closer to the mainstream as their approach becomes popularized through 'amphibian' entrepreneurs as was the case for American independent cinema in the 80s (Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016). A cultural enterprise might even fit into all of those categories, moving in and out of them over the course of time and with respect to different roles, relationships and projects. Hence, the business model which cultural entrepreneurs embrace, choose or surrender themselves to is also informed by the way their creative agency is positioned

in the field. It is often a result of complex negotiation between finding the time to pursue their creative visions and acquiring the necessary resources for their projects and their own livelihood. Going non-profit might be an attractive strategy for cultural entrepreneurs whose creative aspirations are less commercially inclined but may have relevant connections to broader social agendas. Others might try to balance doing more conventional work or work unrelated to their artistic endeavours to cross fund difficult-to-categorize projects or outputs. Then again, mavericks usually do not only rearticulate norms within the field, but also develop new business models consistent with their different approach to the industry. Svenjenova, Planellas and Vives (2010), for instance, trace the business model evolution of Ferran Adrià, a Spanish chef and entrepreneur renowned for developing and pushing the so called 'nouvelle cuisine' along and beyond the restaurant elBulli. They show how Adrià continuously expanded his business to create more space for creative experimentation. Recent research on cultural entrepreneurship thus highlights that cultural entrepreneurship engages in complex relational work in order to forge the collaborative networks that constitute contemporary art worlds and that allow not only for the production of art, but also for the articulation of an income and sustainable business models. In this relational work, agency and constraint emanate from the dynamic position that cultural entrepreneurs assume and aspire to within an art field, and the way in which they navigate the tension between on the one hand pursuing unique creative visions or aiming at innovating the norms that dominate certain artistic communities and on the other hand staying intelligible within the conventions of a certain art field in order to gain legitimacy and access to its resources.

2.3 Forging and navigating socio-symbolic and affective-material spaces

This body of research thus highlights how cultural entrepreneurs navigate art worlds as complex 'socio-symbolic spaces' (Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016) and mainly draws upon interpretative, Bourdieuan and institutional frameworks. It emphasizes that cultural entrepreneurs, particularly if they operate at the borders or fringes of dominant conventions, not only reorganize and blur social boundaries, but often also symbolic ones. Symbolic boundaries are the "conceptual distinctions made by social actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space" (Lamont & Molnar,

2002, p. 168). They define what is important, form the basis for judgement of quality and organize who receives opportunity and recognition in collaborative networks (Candace Jones, Maoret, Massa, & Svejenova, 2012). In the cultural sphere, symbolic boundaries generate differentiations between different genres and who appreciates them (Anand & Peterson, 2000; Bryson, 1996; Dimaggio, 1982; Rao, Monin, & Durand, 2005) and define what modes of production and expression are legitimate. Controversy, polarizations and intensive debates around cultural and creative productions are an indicator that symbolic boundaries have been crossed, that the purity of dominant categories is threatened (Candace Jones, 2010). Cultural entrepreneurs, especially those who aim at challenging dominant conventions thus engage in 'boundary work' (Candace Jones, 2010; Lamont & Molnar, 2002). Institutional theory emphasizes the role of status and reputation for entrepreneurs' ability to change and challenge symbolic boundaries (Dacin, Dacin, & Matear, 2010; Dorado, 2005; Maguire, Hardy, & Lawrence, 2004). Status and reputation are indicators of actors' 'symbolic capital', or their capacity to define 'what counts' and 'what is at stake' in a certain cultural field. However, cultural entrepreneurs also use other resources and tactics in those symbolic struggles (Candace Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen & Townley, 2016). DiMaggio (1982), for instance, referred to the process of 'framing' as an act through which cultural agents try to establish new relations between audiences and artworks. Candace Jones, Maoret, Massa & Svejenova (2012) illustrate how the mobilization of a specific vocabulary was a central strategy for architects to fashion the new category of 'modern architecture'. This resonates with a plethora of research from the last decade which emphasizes how entrepreneurs use labels, metaphors or analogies to create legitimacy for and meaning around their entrepreneurial activities and organizational innovations (Gehman & Soublière, 2017; Granqvist, Grodal, & Woolley, 2013; Lounsbury & Glynn, 2019; Navis & Glynn, 2010) and apply storytelling to win over key audiences and investors (Lounsbury & Glynn, 2001; Navis & Glynn, 2010), for instance in crowdfunding campaigns (S. Manning & Bejarano, 2017).

While contemporary research emphasizes the social and symbolic dimension of cultural entrepreneuring, it is still surprisingly silent on its material and affective dimensions. This is astonishing if we consider that these dimensions are core attributes of this new aesthetic capitalism. Hence, although I am also interested in how cultural entrepreneurship forges, navigates and breaches art worlds and their margins as it becomes a vehicle for emancipatory endeavours, I will contribute to this ongoing

debate by turning to a different perspective, emphasizing the role of materiality and affect. In this I highlight that the art worlds which cultural entrepreneurship navigates and negotiates are not just socio-symbolic spaces but affective-material ones, too. This research angle, while already present in some of the research on cultural entrepreneurship and the CCI, is still underdeveloped. McRobbie (2011) or Gill (2014), for instance, note the 'passionate attachment' which creatives and cultural entrepreneurs have for their work and their field, despite the precarious and often exploitative labour conditions which they are subjected to (Bulut, 2015; de Peuter, 2011; Kong, 2011; Threadgold, 2018). This enthusiasm appears to be fuelled by "the sense of autonomy and opportunity, the playful and pleasurable nature of the work, and the opportunity for community and political activism" affording creatives with 'affective wages' that compensate for the difficult work conditions (Oakley, 2014, p. 151; Menger, 1999). While the pleasure and pain of this new mode of work has been discussed and analysed critically on different accounts (Cockayne, 2016; Gill, 2011), not least in the aftermath of Boltanski and Chiapello's (2005) influential 'new spirit of capitalism', recent research efforts have emphasized that the affective spaces of these art worlds stretch beyond the personal experiences of those creative and cultural entrepreneurs and at the same time envelop them more intricately (De Molli, Mengis & van Marrewijk, 2019). Resonating with the observations that I have made in the introduction, they argue that affective dynamics are central to organizing cultural entrepreneurship and art worlds on a broader level. On the one hand, cultural entrepreneurship as Reckwitz (2012, 2017b) or Thrift (2008) and other cultural geographers have pointed out, shapes the affective topographies of our everyday life and consumption by contributing to aestheticized spaces and urban atmospheres (De Molli, Mengis & van Marrewijk, 2019; Michels, Beyes, & Steyaert, 2014; Michels & Steyaert, 2017). On the other hand, affective forces are also central in shaping the collaborative processes that give rise to cultural production and consumption. Klamer (2011), for instance, points to the affective process of 'firing up' potential partners and persuading collaborators as central to cultural entrepreneurship. Materialization, such as sketches and drawings (Klamer, 2011) or prototypes (Powell & Sandholtz, 2012), and design (Khaire, 2019) are often central for this process of generating excitement around a project. These material elements become important 'boundary objects' (Alderman, Ivory, McLoughlin, & Vaughan, 2005; S. Manning & Bejarano, 2017), enabling joint meaning-making, imagination and affect to emerge around projects. Scott (2012) evokes the notion of

'buzz' to frame the enthusiasm which cultural entrepreneurs try to generate among various cultural intermediaries and which circulates through the infectious power of rumors and recommendations along those industry networks. It represents a project's perceived 'potential' and critically influences its ability to attain and attract resources. While this research hints at the importance of affective and material relations for entrepreneurship in the CCI, I argue that there is still a need for a more integrated understanding through what processes and tactics cultural entrepreneurship navigates, organizes and at times also breaches art worlds as affective-material spaces and processes.

Research along these lines also points to the embodied and tacit way in which entrepreneurial projects relate to and navigate the affective and material dimensions of these art worlds as an important aspect of cultural entrepreneuring. Recently, research around the subject of craft work (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Gherardi & Perrotta, 2014) or perfume-making (Islam, Endrissat & Noppeney, 2016) has explored how embodied and affective relations to materiality organize creative and cultural production. Islam, Endrissat & Noppeney (2016), for instance, trace the process of scent innovation through the translation of visual images into a new perfume. They argue that the multiplicity of affordances of material artefacts allow for novel ways of articulating familiar cultural schemas that we can only access through tacit and embodied knowledge. Gherardi (2016) has developed the notion of 'formativeness' to understand craftwork as a mode of creating where 'production' and 'invention' are thoroughly intertwined, co-constituting each other and where the practice and the object emerge in a process of mutual affection. Mood boards are another way how materiality and its affordances organize creativity and coordination in cultural entrepreneurship (Endrissat, Islam, & Noppeney, 2016). Bell and Vachhani (2020) on the other hand rather stress the vitality of matter – which is neither 'inert' nor 'opaque' (Gherardi & Perrotta, 2014) – and argue that it leaves affective traces, organizes affective atmospheres and creates affective encounters that are central to how craft work not only is produced but also consumed. In their investigation into the intimate corporeal relationship between craft workers and their materials, Gherardi and Perotta (2014) carve out material hybridization as an important process through which cultural entrepreneurs pursue innovation. While this work acknowledges the importance of a more embodied perspective on organizational processes in the CCI, both the embodiment and the affective dimension of material relations and encounters with nonhumans remain under-explored in

cultural entrepreneurship and are frequently neglected in MOS more broadly (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Kenny & Fotaki, 2014). The importance of the body and bodily relations is thus something I also aim to address, as I conceptualize and investigate the role of affective and material processes in cultural entrepreneurship.

While affective dynamics and material relations seem to be particularly relevant for understanding how entrepreneurship creates novelty, produces legitimacy and navigates boundaries in the realm of the CCI, I would argue that it can also contribute to deepening our understanding of the role of affect and materiality in entrepreneurial processes more broadly. Entrepreneurship research is finally starting to acknowledge their relevance also for understanding entrepreneurial processes in more general terms. Sarasvathy's (2003) influential theory of effectuation, for instance, stresses that entrepreneuring starts by exploring what I would frame as the material and embodied embeddedness in which entrepreneurs are situated. Or scholars such as Baker & Nelson (2005), or Powell & Sandholtz (2012) have mobilized the notion of 'bricolage' to frame this bringing together of materialities from different domains as a form of cultural improvisation and an important entrepreneurial practice that promotes innovation (Islam, Endrissat & Noppeney, 2016; Rao, Monin & Durand, 2005). Both Baker and Nelson's work on bricolage as well as Sarasvathy's approaches emphasize that entrepreneurial resources (just as entrepreneurial opportunities) come into existence through a specific engagement with and appropriation of the materialities that entrepreneurs are surrounded by. Yet, implicitly, both theories frame those materialities as passive 'resources' which are constructed by entrepreneurial activities to serve as tools that entrepreneurs draw upon while forging their initiatives. More recently, in particular actor-network theory (ANT) inspired research has questioned this passive understanding of materiality as a resource by ascribing nonhumans their own agencies (Murdock & Varnes, 2018). Roscoe, Cruz & Howorth (2013), for instance, who trace the becoming of a large agribusiness in Honduras with an ANT approach, argue that the opportunity has a historical and material specificity – being constituted by dense and changing material networks of which the entrepreneur represents just one element. In the case of the historic analysis of the agribusiness, the land, the local fauna and soil, the sun and the weather constituted the opportunity as much as the market for certain crops. Lamime, Fayolle, Jack & Byrne (2019), studying different technology-based start-ups, show how materiality not only plays a crucial role in shaping the unfolding creation of the opportunity, but also in communicating it, enrolling others

into its network (for instance via videos, power point presentations or prototypes). Or Barinaga (2017), in her research on a nascent social enterprise, emphasizes that materiality plays an important role in stabilizing a new venture by grounding initially fluid networks and committing partners to a particular project trajectory.

Furthermore, also the 'pleasure' and 'pain' of entrepreneuring have started to gain more attention in the entrepreneurship community, with research acknowledging that entrepreneuring "has a vitality, not captured by simply examining aspects of the entrepreneur, opportunity, venture, network or other traditional foci" (Morris, Kuratko, Schindehutte, & Spivack, 2012, p. 11). Entrepreneurial passion "as any intense emotion that stirs humans with energy and deep longing to make a difference", for instance, has received increasing attention in the literature as an important resource that helps entrepreneurs to pursue their goals despite resistance (Cardon, Wincent, Singh, & Drnovsek, 2009, p. 515; Laaksonen, Ainamo, & Karjalainen, 2011; Rindova, Barry & Ketchen, 2009). Similarly, Goss, Jones, Betta & Latham (2011), drawing upon a sociological framework of interaction rituals (Collins, 1990, 2004; Summers-Effler, 2002), use 'emotional energy' and its agentic capacity as a key concept to understanding how emancipatory entrepreneurship can emerge as well as how agency and constraint are negotiated in dynamic social interactions. Hjorth (2013), finally, emphasizes that creating new modes of social existence, something frequently pursued not only by cultural, but also by social, institutional and even conventional entrepreneurs, is inseparable from creating new modes of affection. Hence, in tracing how cultural entrepreneurship operates through, fosters and navigates collaborative processes through material relations and affective dynamics, I can hopefully contribute to a deeper understanding of the role of materiality and affects in forms of emancipatory organizing in general.

2.4 The politics of cultural entrepreneurship

The emancipatory aspiration of cultural entrepreneurship has articulated the CCI also as an interesting field of research for critical management scholars. Indeed, the material and affective capacities of artistic and cultural entrepreneurship are often celebrated for their critical political potential. Cultural and artistic entrepreneurs, as critical entrepreneurship scholars highlight, channel desires into something that disrupts established patterns of meaning. They create new representations and affects

going beyond the imagination of the world as it is (Dey & Mason, 2018; Hjorth, 2013). Dey and Mason (2018), for instance, argue that the art activist organization 'Yes Men' challenges collective constraints of imagination through materially staged and affectively charged forms of 'disruptive truth telling' (Dey & Mason, 2018). Dashtipour and Rumens (2018) carve out how a Swedish magazine fights racism by articulating a material incongruency that rearticulates dominant representations of Swedish identity. Barinaga (2017), in her engaged scholarship on entrepreneurship as social change explores the capacity of community based mural art to requalify stigmatized neighbourhoods, while Beyes (2010, 2015) researches post-dramatic theatre as a way to articulate a temporary and conflictual 'counter public' in urban space. Cultural and artistic entrepreneurship, it appears, is tied to the specific promise or hope of the autonomous capacities and political possibilities of the arts. It propagates the notion that the creation of the new, in entrepreneurship and in art somehow resists "the coding of desire into pre-fabricated social machines of production" (Hjorth, 2013, p. 35) and allows to produce other "fictions of a possible politics" (Beyes, 2015, p. 447) – engaging and forging audiences around the development of a more just and/or sustainable society (Beyes, 2020).

This capacity and interest of cultural and artistic practices in playing with and intervening in the texture of contemporary society has also been taken up in art theory, which has turned to labels such as the 'post-medium condition' or the 'performative turn' of art, or notions such as 'social art', 'process art', or 'live-art', to frame these contemporary forms of art practices as well as their "fundamental interest in the nature of sociality" (S. Jackson, 2011, p. 2). Already in the 1930s, Walter Benjamin (2003) theorized art in relation to the modes of production and organization ‚of its times', postulating that art should actively intervene in and involve the viewer in the process of production: „This apparatus is better, the more consumers it is able to turn into producers – that is the more readers or spectators turn into collaborators" (Benjamin, 2003, p. 777). Contemporary art since the 1960s has intensified this tendency by radically multiplying "the materials, practices and sites that artists engage" (Beyes, 2015, p. 446), making events and people central to its workings, continuously blurring the boundaries between art and everyday life and art and other social spheres (Rancière, 2007, 2010). Such artistic practices and their ‚organizational intent' – as Osborne (2013) calls it – are often fuelled by a political underpinning and artistic critique of contemporary modes of societal organization, which are understood as being dominated by neoliberalism,

capitalist exploitation, increasing inequality and gradual deterioration of the welfare state (Beyes, 2015; S. Jackson, 2011). Artistic means of expression and aesthetics rather than being art proper, thus autonomous and essentially without purpose, are used by those artistic and cultural entrepreneurs to try and make the world a better place without them ceasing to be artists or abandoning art (Groys, 2014). In this new mode of art production, artists are conceived less as individual creators of discrete objects and more as a collaborators and producers of situations. The work of art as a finite, portable, commodifiable product is reconceived as an ongoing or long-term project with an unclear beginning and end, while the audience, previously conceived of as 'viewer' or 'beholder' is now repositioned as a co-producer or participant (Bishop, 2012).

Through constructing other social situations and ongoing processes, cultural entrepreneurship thus frequently aims at producing "new social relationships and thus new social realities" (Bishop, 2006, p. 12). It hopes to empower the engaged subjects, creating greater intellectual and collective agency: bringing art not only closer to everyday life, but also addressing social issues such as changing living conditions in economically underdeveloped areas, raising ecological awareness or attracting attention to the plight of illegal immigrants (Bishop, 2006; Groys, 2014). Bourriaud (2010) has tried to frame this new politics of art as a ‚relational aesthetics' that longs to articulate 'micro-utopias' or 'social interstices' which resist the market and create new and different relations between the people who get involved in these often participatory art productions. In accordance with this, geographers such as Amin and Thrift (2009) have pointed out that architecture and performance art have made some of the most enticing and exciting attempts at creating new modes of belonging in contemporary urban landscape. It is along the capacity of cultural entrepreneurship to intensify the social – "welcoming instead of reducing social complexity" both in its production and organization – that cultural work is sometimes framed as a "source of renewed creativity and political hope" (Oakley, 2014, p. 155). Therefore, tuning into the material relations and affective dynamics of cultural entrepreneurship in my opinion also opens up important avenues for exploring in more depth these contemporary political capacities of cultural entrepreneurship, or how cultural entrepreneurship can forge a CCI that experiments with and articulates a potentially even more radical form of the social enterprise and cooperative organizing, "opening up other spaces of

thinking or alternative views – ethically, politically and aesthetically" (Oakley, 2014, p. 156; McRobbie, 2011).

Nevertheless, it is important to keep in mind that in the past two decades cultural entrepreneurship has not only been celebrated for its emancipatory promise but also been critically discussed for its complicity with and enactment of contemporary (neoliberal) modes of domination. Barinaga (2017) for instance, notes in her research on devalued neighborhoods that the very cultural and artistic practices set out to overcome territorial stigma also reproduced them. Indeed, recent scholarship in the field of the creative and cultural industries has also emphasized how the CCI's are (re)producing contemporary 'geometries of power' with regards to race, gender and class relations (privileging for instance male and white voices and modes of existing) (Gibson & Kong, 2005). Critical scholars are quick to point out that the 'debordering' of artistic practices (Beyes, 2015; S. Jackson, 2011) and the expansion of the field of art (Reckwitz, 2017b), which broached aesthetic practices into all kinds of social fields and spheres, has also articulated new modes of domination. Recently, 'art washing' has been coined as a term to problematize the way that art and the CCI in general contribute to the gentrification of affordable neighbourhoods while at the same time boosting the image of corporate giants who figure as sponsors for instance of supposedly neutral art institutions (Raunig & Ray, 2009). Frequently, cultural and artistic practices become complicit with contemporary 'branding' culture, helping to boast the 'competitiveness' of cities and regions or providing institutions with status and cultural capital rather than critical reflection (Bishop, 2012; Hall & Page, 2012; Steyaert & Beyes, 2009). The summoning of cultural activities, art interventions and public art in the aestheticizing and vitalization of urban life has also substantially contributed to this 'affective engineering' of cities (Thrift, 2008).

In as much as cultural and art entrepreneurship is called upon to contribute to the 'creative' or 'entrepreneurial' city (D. Harvey, 1989; Landry, 2008), and the attraction of its 'creative classes' (Florida, 2004), it produces and reproduces a model of capitalism that articulates new forms of exploitation (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005). Situational or engaged art, for instance, is often produced through those very neoliberal cultural funding policies which have been keen to draw upon art to support their social inclusion agendas while at the same time cutting and privatizing health care, education or support for marginal groups (Bishop, 2012). Furthermore, critical

scholars have emphasized how the uncertainties of cultural and creative production and innovation are mitigated through hyperflexible modes of organizing which offset the risks to the workforce (Gibson & Kong, 2005; McRobbie, 2002, 2016). This mode of organizing turns workers into increasingly vulnerable individuals that are forced to operate under precarious circumstances and respond to those uncertainties "through a proliferation of self-employment, project-based employment, microbusinesses and startups" (Gibson & Kong, 2005, p. 554), taking on and reproducing precisely the neoliberal entrepreneurial subjectivities and socialities they aim to resist (Bröckling, 2016). Politically, cultural and artistic entrepreneurship thus operates at the fragile interstice between rupturing and aestheticizing the status quo, between challenging and re-enacting the dominant matrices of power (2012; Groys, 2014; Rancière, 2009). In cultural entrepreneurship as in other forms of entrepreneuring, emancipation and oppression are both immanent and often subtly intertwined potentials (Verduijn, Essers, Dey, & Tedmanson, 2014). It is pivotal to keep this ambiguous double capacity of (cultural) entrepreneurship in mind as I am exploring the political capacities of cultural entrepreneurship from a material and affective perspective.

Admittedly, my hope is that the material and affective angle which I am to engage in this research will enable us to mobilize and articulate an understanding of cultural entrepreneurial politics that both integrates and complicates these emancipatory or neoliberal readings. Rancière (2009), in one of his most recent discussions of the politics of this new mode of critical artistic and cultural production, already points us towards such a more ambiguous and perhaps more intricate material and affective politics of cultural entrepreneurship. He is keen to emphasize that there is no straightforward link between the critical intention of a work of art and its socio-political effect. Audiences and publics of cultural productions, he argues, are never mere 'passive' spectators (even if they are not actively contributing to the creation of the artwork). They are always active 'recipient', 'interpreter' and 'translator' of the artistic and cultural experiences they are making. In the way that cultural and artistic productions intervene into the sensory fabric of ordinary experience, intertwining and twisting its materiality, percepts and affects, connecting and disconnecting its sensory texture, they can articulate what Rancière (2007, 2009) calls another 'distribution of the sensible', another mode of being together. This reorganization of the sensory texture of our ordinary lives through cultural and artistic means, at best, allows for a kind of 'deidentification' of those who become engaged with it and "overthrows

the 'right' relationship between what a body 'can' do and what it cannot" (Rancière, 2009, p. 71). Rather than creating awareness, it creates different forms of tolerances and intolerances and new passions by breaking and shifting the relation between what a person can see, what she can think and what she can feel. This shift and disruption always has something unpredictable to it: It is never entirely calculable, neither intentional, nor incidental, but located somewhere in the in-betweenness of the staged event (J. Bennett, 2010).

Hence, instead of fixating on the collaborative modes of such cultural artistic productions and the way they aim to create community or inspire action, Rancière instigates us to look at whether and how they 'redistribute the sensible' to understand their political capacity (Beyes, 2015, 2015; Hjorth, 2013). Ultimately, politics according to Rancière (2009, p. 56) always implies "the transformation of the sensory fabric of being together". Rancière's reading of the sensory politics of art and aesthetics thus invites us to pay closer attention to how cultural entrepreneurship produces different sensory-scapes materially and affectively, not only to better understand its processual unfolding, but also to map its political (and critical) capacity. Entrepreneurship scholars such as Beyes (2010, 2015) or Hjorth (2013) already hint at this capacity of (cultural) entrepreneurship, tracing it for instance in the transformation of urban spaces or the disruptive affective capacities of entrepreneurial initiatives. Yet, it remains open through which 'tactics' (Hjorth, 2004) cultural entrepreneuring tries to stage and organize such redistributions of the sensible and what role material and affective relations play in actualizing them – and where and how they might also fail to do so. This constitutes another important research gap that I am hoping to address with this project.

2.5 Reframing and revisiting cultural entrepreneurship

In this chapter, I have situated my research within the contemporary academic debates on organizational and entrepreneurial processes in the CCI. I have shown that there is a growing body of literature that explores cultural entrepreneurship as a new trope of entrepreneurship emerging in this thriving aesthetic capitalism. I have also emphasized that most studies draw upon Bourdieuan, interpretative or institutional frameworks to elaborate on how cultural entrepreneurship navigates the complex collaborative networks which organize contemporary art worlds while remaining

surprisingly silent on the material and affective dimensions of this process of cultural entrepreneuring. My research tries to address this gap by shedding a light on those important yet underexplored layers of cultural entrepreneurial processes. It traces their emancipatory aim by focusing on how cultural entrepreneurship draws upon and reorganizes the material relations and landscapes of everyday life and moves along and through affective intensities. By emphasizing the embodiment and the embeddedness of those material and affective relations in cultural entrepreneuring, my study also contributes to a more profound understanding of the role of feelings which are "pre-reflexively experienced through the body" in shaping organizational processes (Kenny & Fotaki, 2014, p. 7). At the same time, this research angle also serves as an opportunity to further explore the political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship. Hence, how cultural entrepreneurship unfolds a form of politics by (re)organizing the material and affective topographies of contemporary society, creating folds and gaps in the fabric of common experience by changing the "cartography of the perceptible, the thinkable and the feasible" (Rancière, 2009, p. 72). The two main research questions that guide this research project are thus closely intertwined. On the one hand, I want to find out along what processes and through what tactics cultural entrepreneurship forges and navigates art worlds as affective-material spaces. On the other hand, on a more conceptual level, I want to explore what kinds of politics emerge when cultural entrepreneurship (re)organizes material and affective relations. In order to do this, I will turn to a conceptual field of what I call 'vital materialism' following Bennett (2001, 2010). In the past two decades, vital materialism and its related streams of thinking have become a particularly promising avenue for conceptualizing and reexploring the relationship between materiality, the body and affect, and for thinking the affective and material politics of everyday life and organizing. In the next chapter, we will take a closer look at the vital materialist ontology and how I intend to work with it for the purpose of this research project.


Intervention des Ateliers für Sonderaufgaben, St. Gallen
im Rahmen der Ausstellung «ausufern»
Rheinufer–Passage
Temporärer Zugang zum Rheinufer mittel
CREATIVE
JAM #1
31.03.15 18:30
CreativeSpace St.Gallen
CREATIVE SPACE
ST.GALLEN
ART AT THE TURN OF THE MILLENNIUM
Gipfeltreffen
Karte
2004
Null Stern Hotel
via
Ausgabe Dez./Jan. | 2015/16
Kunst
im Doppelpack

Patrik: ‘That has probably been up here for quite a while, right?
Woman: ‘Right, for a long-time, twenty-eight years.’
She opens the leather suitcase.
Patrik: ‘Wow, this is pure gold – it is just like in a Western when the suitcase full of money appears.’
The woman laughs.
Patrik: ‘Isn’t that fantastic?’ Frank (whispering): ‘spectacular.’

BIGNIK documentary, fabric hunt

Q2




RATHAUS STADT ST.
st.gallen

tesa
EXTRA STRONG
20m²
Ich war noch nie im Ausland. Und jetzt kommt die Welt zu mir.
(Köbi Dietrich, Oberster Null Stern Butler)

3 A vital materialist perspective on cultural entrepreneuring

In order to investigate how cultural entrepreneurship forges and navigates art worlds and their margins as affective-material spaces and what kind of politics emerge when cultural entrepreneurship (re)organizes material and affective relations, I will turn to the conceptual thinking and language of 'vital materialism'. I use the notion vital materialism, which has been coined by the American political theorist and philosopher Jane Bennett (2010) to denote a field of theoretical and conceptual thinking that has been budding in the past thirty years and which has influenced the conceptualization of social processes and critical politics in various academic disciplines in the humanities and social sciences, among them also management and organization studies. What I consider as vital materialist thinking is not a closed theoretical school, but rather a field of different, yet resonating conceptual and theoretical approaches which broach issues of material agency and affective capacities from various entry points and with a multiplicity of conceptual tools and languages. At times, the theoretical notions and thinkers which I will draw upon to ground and elaborate on the vital materialist ontology that guides my research also run under labels such as 'new materialism' (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Kissmann & van Loon, 2019) or 'posthumanism' (Gherardi, 2017b; Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015). Nevertheless, I chose the notion of vital materialism for the purpose of this research project because, in my opinion, it best highlights the core concerns that organize the conceptual perspective of this study: its interest in the vital capacity and material dimension of cultural entrepreneurship.

In this chapter, I will unfold my take on a vital materialism and show how it directs my conceptualization of the processes and politics of cultural entrepreneurship. In order to do this, I will in section 3.1 first sketch the four main theoretical streams that have particularly shaped vital materialist thinking: actor-network theory, feminist new materialism, non-representational theory and practice approaches. I will then discuss how in their differences and diffractions they have opened up rich trajectories for studying vital material processes in MOS. In section 3.2, I will then show in more depth how I will work with the conceptual apparatus of vital materialism. In section 3.2.1, I first discuss how we can conceptualize entrepreneurial processes as agentic assemblages

that create intra-active entanglements between various humans and nonhumans and elaborate how they articulate specific sociomaterial orders and boundaries. In section 3.2.2, I will then take a closer look at vital materialist conceptualization of the (human) body. I unfold how the body as a porous body-subject always encounters and extends to an ecology of others which co-articulate its embodied experience and allow for the movement of different affective capacities. Finally, in section 3.3, I will summarize this chapter by carving out how a vital materialist perspective allows us to rearticulate and specify our research questions and by giving an outlook on the following methodological chapter.

3.1 Topographies of vital mattering

The growing interest in studying the vitality and materiality of organizational and entrepreneurial processes in MOS follows and mirrors recent developments in which around the 'ontological turn' (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Burell, 2003; Dale & Latham, 2015), the 'turn to practice' (Feldman & Orlikowski, 2011; Gherardi, 2016; Knorr-Cetina, Schatzki, & von Savigny, 2001; Miettinen, Samra-Fredericks, & Yanow, 2009; Nicolini, 2013; Orlikowski & Scott, 2015), the 'turn to affect' (Clough, 2007; Fotaki, Kenny, & Vachhani, 2017; Gherardi, 2017a; Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele, & Carreri, 2019; Kenny & Fotaki, 2014), as well as a 'post-qualitative research turn' (Benozzo, Carey, Cozza, Elmenhorst, Fairchild, Koro-Ljungberg & Taylor, 2019; Gherardi, 2017b; Lather & St. Pierre, 2013; MacLure, 2013b) the material and the visceral aspects of social and organizational life have shifted more strongly into focus. This shifting focal point is underpinned in particular by four theoretical streams with resonating and intersecting research agendas and vocabularies: actor-network theory, feminist new materialism, more-than-representational theory and practice approaches. In their differences and resonances, these four approaches are opening up rich trajectories for introducing vital materialist thinking in MOS and entrepreneurship studies. In the subsequent sections, I will briefly discuss these four streams as well as their reception in MOS as groundwork that maps the points of entry for my own access to and understanding of vital materialism in this study.

3.1.1 The flat ontologies of actor-network theory

Actor-network theory (ANT) with key proponents such as Callon (1998), Latour (1993b, 1999b, 2008; Latour & Woolgar, 1986) or Knorr-Cetina (1981), and in the second generation, Law (2008a) and Hassard (Law & Hassard, 1999) and Mol (2002) has been one of the first theoretical streams which firmly made matter 'matter' again (Barad, 2003), working against a longstanding bias in social and cultural theory to naturalize and thus silence how material forces are entangled with the social (Reckwitz, 2012). ANT radically challenges the Cartesian nature/culture and object/subject divide by proposing a 'flat-ontology', thus a symmetrical relationship between humans and nonhumans, which are both ascribed the same ontological status as actants (Harman, 2014). In an ANT perspective, agency cannot be attributed to a single actor (or rather actant), but is articulated in productive webs of relations between different kinds of actors, including objects, technologies, spaces, ideas, animals, plants and humans: thus an actor-network. Latour (1999b) uses the example of the man and the gun to illustrate this. If a vengeful person shoots somebody with a gun, who is doing the shooting: the person or the gun? In an ANT perspective, both the man and the gun and are transformed through their intertwined relationship in an actor-network: "You are different with a gun in hand; the gun is different with you holding it" (Latour, 1994, p. 33). It is the combined programs of action, or as Latour calls them 'scripts' of both the man and the gun that eventually shoot the man. Rather than articulating a consistent theoretical framework, ANT understands itself as a research sensibility. It is interested in examining mundane practices and their sociomaterial effects, tells stories about how networks assemble (or don't) and incites researchers to trace those networks-in-the-making (usually through single case studies) and the tensions and different modes of ordering that organize them (Law, 2008a).

Despite being more method than theory, ANT has articulated influential conceptual notions, the most prominent of them being the 'sociology of translation' (Callon, 1986), which has also found its way into MOS (Wæraas & Nielsen, 2016). ANT frames translation as a process through which various human and nonhuman elements are related and meshed together for an entity to emerge and (temporally) stabilize. Translation, which Callon (1986) describes along four moments: problematization, interessement, enrolment and mobilization of allies, is a complex process of negotiation (involving persuasion, power plays and strategic maneuvers (Nicolini,

2010)), which aims at aligning and shifting the 'interests' of the various elements to enact new 'material-semiotic' relationships (Law, 2008a). One could interpret Latour's (1993a) story about the pasteurization of France as such a process of entrepreneurial and at the same time institutional translation whereby farms, technicians, laboratories, veterinarians, statistics and bacilli are domesticated and shaped by an actor-network whose material-semiotic effect is not only a revolutionary vaccine for anthrax and the agricultural transformation of France, but also the heroic figure of Pasteur himself. In MOS the concept of translation has been particularly influential in articulating what some call the 'Scandinavian' brand of institutional theory, which thinks organizational change and institutional flexibility through translation in order to explain how organizational contexts adopt travelling management ideas differently (Czarniawska, 2009; Czarniawska & Sevón, 1996; Hultin, Introna, & Mähring, 2020; Wæraas & Nielsen, 2016). As I have already discussed in the previous chapter, the sociology of translation recently has also entered the field of entrepreneurship studies to conceptualize entrepreneuring as a process of translation in which a new actor-network becomes stabilized (Korsgaard, 2011; Murdock & Varnes, 2018; Steyaert, 2007), and to emphasize the role of materiality in this process (Lamime, Fayolle, Jack & Byrne, 2019; Roscoe, Cruz & Howorth, 2013). Despite the success and popularity of the flat ontology of ANT in re-mattering organizational processes, critical MOS scholars are still debating controversially whether or not ANT offers the conceptual tools for a substantive political critique of organizing (Alcadipani & Hassard, 2010; Whittle & Spicer, 2008).

3.1.2 Feminist new materialism and posthuman entanglements

Feminist new materialism then, as I would argue, has radicalized the relational material sensibilities already articulated in ANT into a posthumanist perspective (Braidotti, 2013) and has carved out a more distinctive political agenda. For one, it has further decentred the humanist subject and simultaneously also brought it back onto the map as a force for making new worlds (Blackman, Cromby, Hook, Papadopoulos, & Walkerdine, 2008). Haraway (2016), for instance, explores and challenges the borders and disjunctions between humans and technology or animals with her metaphors of the cyborg, the onco-mouse or the multi-species to articulate a form of bio-egalitarianism (Gherardi, 2017b). Braidotti (1994, 2002) takes up Deleuze & Guattari (2013) to advocate for a nomadic subject and proposes the notion of 'more-

than-human' to overcome the human/nonhuman dichotomy in an eco-philosophy of multiple belongings, while Grosz (1994, 1994) in her exploration of 'volatile bodies' emphasizes the corporeality of subjectivity that cannot be reduced to mere cultural scripts. Bennett (2010), finally, draws upon 'ecology' as a central notion to think politics through the vibrant agencies and publics of (non)human bodies. Feminist new materialism thus openly embraces a form of affirmative politics which combines critique with creativity in the pursuit of alternative visions and projects of the social (Braidotti, 2013). Second, the work of theoretical physicist and feminist scholar of technology, Karen Barad (2003) on posthumanist performativity has been influential in further theorizing sociomaterial relations. Building on the philosophy-physics of Niels Bohr and her own research experience in quantum physics, she argues for the inextricable entanglement of the social and the material as well as the materializing force of matter, which is neither brute nor passive and has its own historicity (Grosz, 2011). Emphasizing the active and agentic capacity of matter, she forges her own ontological position of agential realism according to which the world is in an ongoing intra-active becoming through performative practices which constitute entangled material agencies. In Barad's perspective, it is the intra-active becoming of both the gun, the man with the gun and the shot man in an apparatus of bodily production that eventually constitutes the specific boundaries (and the differential identities) of those three elements: the murderer, the murder weapon and the body.

Barad's work on intra-active matter has significantly informed recent discussions on sociomateriality in MOS. Orlikowski (2007, 2010) together with Scott (Orlikowski & Scott, 2015; S. V. Scott & Orlikowski, 2014) have introduced her to MOS to challenge not only the blatant absence of materiality in much contemporary research on organizations, but also the reflex of MOS to conceptualize the social and the material as two separate realms. Building on Barad, they articulate a program of 'strong sociomateriality' (M. Jones, 2014), which "shifts the focus away from 'independent objects with inherent boundaries and properties' to practices, matters of doings/actions that perform particular phenomena" (Orlikowski, 2010, p. 134; see also: Barad, 2003). According to Jones (2014, p. 897), such a notion of strong sociomateriality, which I will also follow in this research project entails five dimensions:

> (1) a concern to (re)establish materiality as central to our understanding of contemporary organizations; (2) an ontological claim about the inextricable entanglement of the social and the material; (3) an anti-essentialist rejection

> of the notion that entities have inherent properties, viewing these rather as relational; (4) a view of the relations and boundaries between the social and material as being enacted rather than given; and (5) a focus on practices, rather than discourses or cognition.

Jones (2014), however, points out that Orlikowski's account of strong materiality, and the research that has built on it, is strangely oblivious to the body, the bodily embeddedness of these activities as well as the affective capacities and embodied experiences that emanate from them. Indeed, the interest in materiality and the concern for re-embodying MOS have largely developed as parallel strands and tend to flatten out the body into a mere vessel or deemphasize the materiality of the body, thus separating human embodiment from the materiality of the nonhuman world (Dale & Latham, 2015) – an issue that I will try to address in my own take on vital materialism.

3.1.3 More-than-representational theory and the power of affect

Non-representational-theory or – as I will call it following Lorimer (2005) – 'more-than-representational theory' (MRT) has been pivotal in bringing this affective dimension of everyday and organizational life to the foreground. It emerged in the field of cultural geography around scholars such as Thrift (1996, 2008), McCormack (2003, 2008), Anderson and Harrison (B. Anderson, 2014; B. Anderson & Harrison, 2010), Vannini (2015b, 2015a) or Lorimer (2005) and has propelled what is now labelled as the 'affective turn' of social theory (Clough, 2007; Gherardi, 2017a). Mirroring Barad's (2003) lamentation that the discursive and semiotic aspects of reality have been overstated by social theory in the last century, MRT branched out to explore the sensual, affective (and material) aspects social life, investigating for instance activities such as dance, walking, gardening or children's play. By studying how "life takes shape in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions" (Lorimer, 2005, p. 84), MRT points to a world that is teeming, eventful, always on the move, thus 'more-than-representational'. Also, it emphasizes an understanding of theory as a practice of adding to rather than representing the world (Massumi, 2002). Following a Massumian (2002), post-Deleuzian or post-Spinozian understanding of affect, MRT

frames affects as a form of corporeal force or impersonal intensities that shape what a body can do and yet "do not belong to a subject and object, nor do they reside in the mediating space between subject or object" (B. Anderson, 2010, p. 161). Contrary to emotions, which appear to be something emanating from within the individual, affect as a term and concept points to the pre- or transpersonal, processual and relational aspect of bodily intensities and the way they are engaged in shaping agency and social configurations (Reckwitz, 2017a).

MRT and affect as its central notion have been influential in opening up a more complex understanding of how the embodied and the social intertwine and connect through affective forces (Clough, 2007; Massumi, 2002; Thrift, 2008) and provided new ways of engaging with experience beyond a strictly humanistic perspective (S. Brown & Tucker, 2010). The approach has been discussed and taken up in a range of different fields, among them feminist theory (Pedwell & Whitehead, 2012; Sedgwick & Frank, 2003), and has also started to become more popular in MOS (see for instance: Amabile, Barsade, Mueller, & Staw, 2005; Beyes & Steyaert, 2012; S. Brown & Tucker, 2010; Fotaki, Kenny & Vacchani, 2017; Michels & Steyaert, 2017). In early discussions of the role of affect within social theory, scholars such as Massumi (2002) and Thrift (2008) argued for a strict body/mind separation and conceptualized the realm of the affective as something 'autonomous', a form of undifferentiated bodily excess which moves beyond cultural representation and escapes language (Wetherell, 2015). Over the years, this ontological premise, which makes the affective almost unaccountable and difficult to access via empirical research, has become questioned. While most scholars agree that affect involves such an intangible, ineffable quality, they have started to challenge this strong distinction between the realm of the affective and the realm of the cultural. Contemporary affect scholars explore how affect forms a part of socio-cultural formations and is embedded in activities and practices (Gherardi, 2017a, 2017c; Reckwitz, 2012, 2017a; Wetherell, 2012, 2013). They try to create a more encompassing view of social action by "directing attention to the somatically sensed body, to perceptions, memories, feelings, forms of muscular movements and proprioceptive responses to vibrations and rhythms" (Wetherell, 2013, p. 352; see also: Blackman & Cromby, 2007). This sensibility also guides my own approach to affect and affective research.

3.1.4 Practice approaches: locating vital materialism in action and assemblage

Wetherell (2013, p. 360) was one of the first to map out how affect is "lodged in embodied sequences of action". She emphasizes that a practice approach "positions affect as a dynamic process, emergent from a polyphony of intersections and feedbacks, working across body states, registrations and categorizations, entangled with cultural meaning-making, and integrated with material and natural processes, social situations and social relationships" (Whetherell, 2015: 139). More recently, practice theorists such as Reckwitz (2012, 2017a) or Gherardi (2016, 2017b, 2017c) in particular have been bridging affect theory and practice approaches, integrating them (more or less explicitly) towards a vital materialist perspective. Reckwitz (2017a), who has been approaching the nexus between affect and social practice from a sociological perspective, argues that every social practice has a built-in affective dimension. He especially emphasizes the role of materiality in the form of spaces or (aesthetic) objects as the driver of the affective capacities of practices. The affectivity permeating a certain practice shapes the experience of this practice. It directs awareness and attention and attributes a specific texture and quality to the identities and positionings which are configured through it. While Reckwitz keeps up a distinction between human bodies and material objects and spaces in his attempt at integrating materiality, affect and practices, Gherardi (2017c, 2017b), who has been influential in introducing affect and practice and their interplay in MOS, conceptualizes a more manifestly posthuman practice theory. Drawing upon the Deleuzian notion of 'agencement' and Barads intra-active matter, she argues that practices are a form of affective assemblage. Thus, "[a]ffects are not just another ingredient of a practice, are neither internal nor external to that practice. They circulate, colour, vibrate, surround and envelop bodies and things that happened to hang together in what is seen as a practice" (Gherardi, 2017c, p. 218). According to her, "we can consider practices as embodied and emplaced, since the issue is not the body per se, but the shifting sociomaterial intra-actions of bodies and matter across time and space" (Gherardi, 2017b, p. 43; see also: Ingold, 2002).

Despite the growing popularity of practice theory in MOS (Nicolini, 2013; Nicolini, Gherardi, & Yanow, 2003), such a posthuman brand of practice theory as it is propagated by Gherardi is still in its infancy, being translated into methodological

sensibilities (Gherardi, 2019; Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019) and conceptual maps (Gherardi, 2017c, 2017a) as well as first empirical inquiries (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Duff & Sumartojo, 2017; Resch & Steyaert, 2020). It is able to integrate different sensibilities which have been articulated in the other streams and underpin vital materialist thinking. At the same time, it also creates lines of flight for opening up the conceptual and methodological 'bracketing' inscribed into some proponents of contemporary practice approaches in organization studies (Whittington, 2011). Ultimately, Gherardi's understanding of practice resonates on many levels and opens up to Bennett's (2001, 2010) articulation of vital materialism, in which matter – human and nonhuman, becomes vibrant in a moving and maybe also fluid assemblage that shapes bodily encounters and human-nonhuman alliances (Duff & Sumartojo, 2017; A. Y. Jackson & Mazzei, 2016). "Agency, in this assemblage, is spatially distributed among vibrant matter, rather than traced to a single source or marked off by a particular boundary" (A. Y. Jackson & Mazzei, 2016, p. 95). While practices as such will not be a prevalent notion in my own conceptual apparatus, the conceptual sensibility of contemporary practice theory which articulates affect and agency as performative processes of assembling heterogeneous bodies and things is central for my own take on vital materialism.

3.2 A vital materialist apparatus for conceptualizing cultural entrepreneurship

Although (proto) vital materialist thinking is bubbling up at the margins of MOS, "[i]n comparison to other social sciences and the humanities, organization studies has been slow to respond to the potential of [vital] materialism" (Bell & Vachhani, 2020, p. 684). While ANT and feminist new materialism in their reception in MOS have sensitized scholars to the agentic and performative capacity of sociomateriality, MRT and practice approaches have paved the way for a more embodied understanding of organizational processes and highlighted the importance of affective forces for moving social configurations. A vital materialist perspective, I would argue, articulates itself at the intersection of these two emphases and challenges us to think about the entanglement of agentic matter with bodily capacities and affective intensities. Although the reception of those four streams in MOS has highlighted different aspects of vital materialism, all four offer interesting and valuable entry points to articulate

a conceptual apparatus that allows us to access such an entangled understanding of materiality, bodies and affect (Müller & Schurr, 2016). While I initially envisioned that I would draw upon practice approaches as a conceptual anchor for developing such an integrated vital materialist understanding of cultural entrepreneurial processes, the Deleuzo-Guattarian (2013) notion of the 'assemblage' ultimately proved to be more helpful in unfolding my data towards my research questions and connecting sociomaterial relations, bodily experiences and affective capacities on a conceptual level. Nevertheless, the vital materialist conceptual apparatus which I will introduce and discuss in the following sections is inspired by and concocted around texts, notions, ideas and sensibilities which originate in all four streams of vital materialist thinking. In section 3.2.1, I will introduce the 'agentic assemblage' (J. Bennett, 2010) and the 'intra-active entanglement' (Barad, 2007) as central notions around which I trace the sociomaterial relations, orders and boundaries enacted in cultural entrepreneurial processes. In section 3.3.2, I will tune into the body as porous 'body-assemblage' (Gherardi, 2017a) to carve out how in such an entrepreneurial assemblage bodies are coupled to an 'ecology of others' (J. Bennett, 2010) that co-articulate the embodied experience of 'body-subjects' (Dale & Latham, 2015; Merleau-Ponty, 1962) and allow for the movement of 'affective capacities' (Deleuze, 2017; Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020).

3.2.1 Entrepreneurial assemblages: agentic entanglements and sociomaterial orders

As I have noted before in particular ANT and its vocabulary has slowly started to take hold in entrepreneurship studies for the purpose of researching and conceptualizing the relational dynamics of human and nonhuman actants and the distributed and processual enactment of entrepreneurial opportunities (Jóhannesson, 2012; Korsgaard, 2011; Murdock & Varnes, 2018). I, however, will turn to the Deleuzo-Guattarian notion of the 'assemblage' to frame the complex web of sociomaterial relations that move and shape entrepreneurial processes. ANT and assemblage thinking have many commonalities: They both stress relations, associations and distributed agency and they are both sensitive to the importance of nonhumans for the articulation of agency, politics and sociomaterial worlds. I chose to work with assemblage thinking because in the way it is foregrounded by Deleuze & Guattari (2013) and taken up, for instance, by Bennett (2010) and other vital materialist thinkers such as Elisabeth Grosz (1994),

it has a stronger corporeal dimension and impetus (Müller, 2015). Although there recently have been attempts at bringing affective forces closer to ANT by bridging, for instance, the sociology of translation with affect theory to articulate an affective ANT (Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020), assemblage in my opinion is the stronger notion for thinking the material, the affective and the body together and thus more apt for unfolding the vital materialist perspective which guides this study. Nevertheless, working with a conceptual assemblage myself, I will co-articulate ANT notions (and others) with my assemblage thinking when they are helpful to and compatible with my research assemblage.

Assemblage as a concept is foreshadowed by Deleuze & Guattari (1983) in 'Anti-oedipus' and then further elaborated in later writings (Müller, 2015), notably in their work 'A thousand plateaus' (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013). As a conceptual tool, it deconstructs the unity and essentialist ontology of natural and social entities and opens up a processual perspective on organizing and entrepreneuring that eschews the nature-culture divide (J. Bennett, 2010; Clegg, Kornberger, & Rhodes, 2005; De Landa, 2006; Nayak & Chia, 2011; Reuber, 2016). From an assemblage perspective, social and natural entities such as society, economy, institutions, practices or human (and nonhuman) bodies do not form a seamless whole, but instead are configurations or rather assemblages of a variety of heterogeneous elements or, as Deleuze (2006, p. 177) puts it: "In assemblages you find states of things, bodies, various combinations of bodies, hodgepodges; but you also find utterances, modes of expression, and whole regimes of signs." In an assemblage, we thus find a multiplicity of different elements: bodies, objects, spaces, discursive signs, enunciations, actions, all kinds of human and nonhuman entities, which are linked together to form a temporary and fragile whole (A. Y. Jackson & Mazzei, 2016; Müller & Schurr, 2016). From an assemblage perspective, we can conceptualize cultural entrepreneurship as a process of constituting and moving such a dynamic sociomaterial assemblage which contains a heterogeneous set of humans and nonhumans that constitute its collaborative and interactive process in the art worlds. It contains, for instance, the entrepreneurs themselves, their audiences and publics, their collaborators and partners, the ideas which they pursue and the discourses they draw upon, the materials (sounds, images, objects) and technologies which they work with, the events they stage, the values they express, the rules and legal frameworks which they are subjected to, the friends who support them and so forth (Reuber, 2016). In an assemblage, all elements have the same initial ontological

status, hence there is no natural hierarchy defining which element in an assemblage is dominant. However, that does not imply that assemblages are totally flat without strata (J. Bennett, 2010; Müller, 2015). Rather, as Grosz (1994, p. 167) notes, "the hierarchies are not the result of substances and their nature and value but of modes of organization of disparate substances". In certain cultural enterprises, the visual online communication might become such a dominant knot in an assemblage, while in others it is the relationship with an institutional organization that directs and at the same time organizes the other elements. Cultural entrepreneurial assemblages thus articulate an uneven topography where power is unequally distributed along the different relational nodes in this intermingling of bodies that allows various elements to move in or out of focus (J. Bennett, 2010). Moreover, elements can enter and be 'allies' of different assemblages at the same time. The head of a marketing department, for instance, can become an important collaborator in an artistic project while at the same time also articulating new or different project expectations as an ally of the private sector.

Assemblage is the English translation of the French original term 'agencement' used by Deleuze & Guattari. There is merit to this translation, as assemblage evokes the being in connection of heterogeneous elements that constitute it as an arrangement or 'collage', a French synonym for assemblage (Gherardi, 2016). However, as different scholars have pointed out, the translation also loses some of the central connotations of the term agencement (Gherardi, 2016; Müller & Schurr, 2016; Phillips, 2006). While assemblage risks overemphasizing assemblage as a (final) state, the notion agencement highlights and emphasizes its processual, productive and agentic capacity, thus the fact that the agencement of an assemblage allows properties and capacities to emerge that exceed and are not reducible to the parts that constitute it. To reinstate this productive capacity, Bennett (2010) coins the notion of the 'agentic assemblage' for her own vital material exploration of assemblage thinking (A. Y. Jackson & Mazzei, 2016). Bennett argues that bodies and vibrant matters enhance their power and capacities by becoming (a part of) heterogeneous agentic assemblages, in which the locus of agency is always the grouping and working together of humans and nonhumans. She contends that in these assemblages, humans are not the only vital bodies. Rather, vibrant matters or objects take on 'thing-power', animating, acting and producing subtle and dramatic effects in these assemblages: the luminosity of an image on social media can catch and intercept our gaze and stir new desires or the agentic capacity of molecular soundwaves can move bodies to reorganize an entire city during an

electronic music festival. By carving out the strange ability and efficacy of ordinary items "to exceed their status as objects and to manifest traces of aliveness", Bennett (2010, p. xvi) emphasizes the wilfulness and recalcitrance of matter that articulates itself beyond and against the context which humans assign to it in an assemblage. Nonhumans can impede the "will and design of humans" but also "act as quasi agents or forces with trajectories, propensities or tendencies of their own" (J. Bennett, 2010, p. viii; see also: Bell & Vachhani, 2020) as "even the humblest forms of matter and energy have the have the potential for self-organization an inorganic matter is much more variable and creative than we ever imagined" (De Landa, 1997, p. 16; see also: Bell & Vachhani, 2020; A. Y. Jackson & Mazzei, 2016).

This vibrancy of matter articulates an agentic assemblage as a sociomaterial hub of emergence and contingence that can make things happen and that persists despite the forces from within that confound it as "materials assert their potentials in the social world" (Bell & Vachhani, 2020, p. 683; J. Bennett, 2010). As a 'living confederation' of vital bodies, it comes together with the desires, affects, intensity and potentialities which vibrate energetically throughout the assemblage and which also hold it together (or pull it apart). Bennet's notion of the agentic assemblage thus points our attention to the vibrancy and unruliness of nonhumans in the cultural entrepreneurial assemblage. It emphasizes how artefacts, materials, landscapes, sounds, ideas, gestures, colours and the propensities and vibrant capacities they articulate in connection with other humans and nonhumans shape entrepreneurial processes by exciting audiences or frustrating authorities, by resisting certain collaborative processes whilst animating others. Her understanding also highlights that while cultural entrepreneurial assemblages form around a conatus to sustain, they are not necessarily harmonious configurations, but rather "complicated web[s] of dissonant connections between bodies" (J. Bennett, 2010, p. 4), configurations thus, where the alliance of those bodies is anything but given and stable, but rather in the process of constant production.

Barad (1999, 2003, 2007), another important vital materialist thinker and theorist, further challenges the ontological separation between the social and the material by articulating her own performative and relational theory of 'agential realism'. Materiality, she argues, is inextricably entangled with the social and hence always already 'sociomaterial'. Through her agential 'onto-epistemology' we can understand this agentic capacity of matter as an effect of the entanglement and intra-active

relationship between humans and nonhumans enacted in these assemblages, because "[c]rucially agency is a matter of intra-acting; it is an enactment, not something that someone or something has" (Barad, 2007, p. 237). Barad coins the notion of 'intra-action' versus 'interaction' to qualify this entangled relationality that constitutes agencies. While interaction suggests that two already defined entities come together and engage in some kind of transaction, intra-action emphasizes that subjects and objects are dynamically, agentially, and iteratively co-articulated in their encounter with one another (Gherardi, 2016; S. V. Scott & Orlikowski, 2014). In cultural entrepreneurial processes, agentic capacities as well as wilful resistances thus emerge from specific human-nonhuman entanglements and their intra-actions. The entanglement of an artistic concept with a local politician might open up new financial support, while the entanglement of a public art installation with construction regulations might articulate resistances. Ultimately,

> to be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. Existence is not an individual affair. Individuals [or bodies] do not pre-exist their interactions; rather, [they] emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating. (Barad, 2007, p. ix)

Entanglement as a notion emphasizes that there are no pre-existing entities or categories that constitute a certain phenomenon. Rather, they come into being in actions and doings. Ford, Harding, Gilmore and Richardson (2017), for instance, trace how leadership is co-constituted along the material presence of the business suit which intra-acts with bodies, histories, desk, discourses and so forth, articulating both the 'manager' and the 'suit' through their entanglement (Bell & Vachhani, 2020). Materiality is thus not understood as a 'thing', but a performative process of materialization that entangles matter and meaning, natural and cultural worlds. It is "neither fixed nor given [but] is produced and productive, generated and generative" (Barad, 2007, p. 137). Barad's concept of entanglement and intra-action invites us to follow in a detailed manner how cultural entrepreneurship navigates agency and constraint along shifting entanglements and sociomaterial presences and articulates different entities, bodies and agential capacities through its entrepreneurial intra-actions. It also emphasizes that the enactment of certain intra-active entanglements not only produces particular agential capacities and entities, but also makes and un-makes, stabilizes and destabilizes differential boundaries between them: for instance

between artists and non-artists, between legitimate and illegitimate artistic and entrepreneurial practices or between art worlds and other worlds (Dale & Latham, 2015). Boundaries and categories in the art worlds, therefore, are produced not just along socio-symbolic but also sociomaterial orders which are constantly enacted, performed and transformed through the entangling of matter and meaning in the cultural entrepreneurial assemblage. Eventually, the intra-active becoming of the art worlds articulated through those agentic entanglements also matters and re-matters the realities in which these entrepreneurial assemblages move.

Ultimately, with its focus on the provisional ordering of entities, assemblage thinking in its resonance with ANT concepts and Barad's (1999, 2003, 2007) agential realism also provides an interesting conceptual lens to trace the dynamics and tensions between stability and change in such sociomaterial configurations. Deleuze & Guattari (2013) emphasize that assemblages as they emerge and hold together establish an organized sociomaterial 'territory' that constantly mutates and transforms (and eventually breaks up). The pervading question according to Deleuze is thus how particular assemblages or entities come into existence and how they are able to persist, thus

> […] what keeps very heterogeneous elements together: e.g. a sound, a gesture, a position, etc., both natural and artificial elements. The problem is one of 'consistency' or 'coherence,' and it is prior to the problem of behaviour. How do things take on consistency? How do they cohere? (Deleuze, 2006, p. 179)

In their empirical work, ANT scholars have articulated interesting answers and conceptual notions in response to this question. Law for instance, (1994) in his exploration of a large scientific laboratory, argues that the interplay of four logics (enterprise, administration, vocation, vision) holds the organization together. These 'modes of ordering' as a network of practices handle and are concerned with different realities, each irreducible to the other, articulating the organizational assemblage as a complex processual multiplicity (Gherardi, 2017b). The geographers Müller and Schurr (2016), tracing the assemblage of transnational assisted reproduction, show that while the central outcome of the assemblage – the baby – is kept constant, the local and global associations that bring it about shift all the time and mould themselves to different situations and contexts. Mol (2002), who follows diagnostics and treatment practices for lower limb atherosclerosis, carves out how the organizational process operates along four different and only partly coordinated actor-networks which articulate not one, but

multiple bodies. Their research highlights that in such organizational processes there is not 'a' sociomaterial order – "[r]ather, there are endless attempts at ordering" (Law, 1994, p. 101). Barad (2007), then again, emphasizes that such organizational processes and their 'modes of ordering' or 'apparati' as she would call them perform local 'agential cuts'. These agential cuts hold together (or destabilize) the disparate elements that constitute particular reality by enacting specific sociomaterial boundaries and differences, inclusions and exclusions, inequalities and hierarchies (Dale & Latham, 2015). At the same time, they also articulate collective 'imaginaries' which serve as more-than-representational frameworks that operate between body and mind, the public and the private. They give structure and meaning to those sociomaterial orders and inform actions and behaviours of collectives, such as organizations and societies (Komporozos-Athanasiou & Fotaki, 2015).

This sensibility of vital materialist thinking for the ordering and reordering of sociomaterial realities and boundaries articulates an interesting lens for studying the emancipatory and political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship. It allows us to explore how entrepreneurship intervenes and articulates itself against (or reproduces) the power structures, practices and conventions of the communities or art worlds which it relates to and is embedded in, by understanding its organizational process as a different (and at times also competing) attempt at ordering sociomaterial relations, 'cutting' and imagining reality. Assemblage theory in particular highlights the role of affect in this process of ordering and reordering reality. Ultimately, as Deleuze & Guattari (1983, p. 6, 2013) emphasize, assemblages are 'desiring machines': "Desire constantly couples continuous flows of partial objects that are by nature fragmentary and fragmented". It is what makes assemblages coalesce (Müller & Schurr, 2016). While notably ANT inspired research has articulated a plethora of different processes, patterns, logics and tensions that mediate and articulate the stabilization and momentum of such sociomaterial assemblages, the affective modalities or tactics that bring such sociomaterial orders or territories into being are still less well explored and have started to gain attention only recently (Müller & Schurr, 2016; Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020). By insisting that "phenomena do not have to be a particular way just because they are a particular way", and by pointing to the subtle modes of domination and contestation inscribed into our sociomaterial realities, assemblage thinking also opens up avenues for a critical political analysis that explores and foreshadows alternative orderings (Müller, 2015, pp. 32–33). In this study, it hopefully foregrounds

an alternative politics of cultural entrepreneurship by allowing me to trace how cultural entrepreneurial assemblages matter and re-matter reality and with it the interplay between art, business and society.

3.2.2 Ecologies of encounter: affective capacities and the body multiple

The vital materialist notion of the assemblage not only allows us to reconceptualize the sociomaterial organization of entrepreneurship, it also allows us to rethink the sociomaterial organization of (human) bodies, embodied experience and affect. While many theoretical traditions articulate the body as some kind of stable, unified system, vital materialist (or posthuman) thinkers emphasize the porosity, dynamism and the multiplicity or 'more-than-Oneness' of the body, which is constantly connecting to the more-than-human world (Alaimo, 2010; Gatens, 1996; E. Manning, 2010). Rather than being an enclosed, biologically determined entity (Ash & Gallacher, 2015), the body is inter- and trans-corporeal, "substantially and perpetually interconnected with the flow of substances and the agencies of the environment" (Alaimo, 2012, p. 476). The body as a body-assemblage, "[…] is radically open to its surroundings and can be composed, recomposed and decomposed by other bodies" (Gatens, 1996, p. 110). From such a perspective, the human body of the cultural entrepreneur is not perceived as a self-contained structure with neatly organized ideas and motivations, but articulates itself as a permeable being that moves along whirling tendencies and shifting intentionalities through its corporeal connection with humans and nonhumans at the fold of their own body: with the touch of a gently ruffled surface, at the sight of a contrasting composition of objects and spaces, the sound of an oscillating word, the warm embrace of a collaborator, the sceptical voice of a participant. As processual becoming, or as Gherardi (2017b) puts it with Barad (2003, p. 818), as "agential intra-activity in its becoming", the body (of the entrepreneur, the collaborator, the participant, the spectator) is continuously 'extending beyond itself' as it is being conjoint and comes in contact with an ecology of other – human and nonhuman – bodies (Blackman, 2008).

Articulating itself against an essentialist understanding of the body as a bounded, individual entity, a vital materialist perspective of the body as body-assemblage is interested in "how bodies become assembled in particular ways through their coupling

or conjoining with particular objects, practices, techniques and artifacts" (Blackman, 2008, p. 107; see also: Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015, p. 8). It emphasizes the fact that how "we live, eat, drink, breathe, commute, hear, see, smell, touch, sense, and experience life are inextricable from our local ecologies" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 833). It hence invites us to become attentive to how cultural entrepreneurial processes assemble and at the same time articulate different bodies by coupling them to other human and nonhuman bodies: things, ideas, colours, rhythms, sensations. Simultaneously, it instigates us to research this conjoint corporeal movement as the coming in contact with and coming into being of an ecology of bodies (Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015). This image of a bodily 'ecology' is drawn upon by different vital materialist thinkers to denote this coming together and inter-being of humans and nonhumans in an interconnected series of relations and activities. It emphasizes the unbounded bodily embeddedness of humans in material and earthly 'environments' as well as the vulnerabilities of both the ecology and the conjoint bodies which co-constitute and open up to each other (Alaimo, 2010; J. Bennett, 2010). Finally, a vital materialist perspective is also suspicious of constructivist traditions, which tend to understand the body as a passive surface open to all kinds of cultural inscriptions. It emphasizes that the body as 'multiple materiality' (Dale & Latham, 2015) is "neither brute nor passive" (Grosz, 2011, p. 18). Instead, it is framed as a resonant composition of diverse networks of desires , practices, technologies, institutions and objects as well as a reservoir and site of potential movement, affect, habits, traits and connections that derive from and interact with these ecological couplings (Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015).

In a vital materialist ontology, the body is thus reimagined as absorptive and viscerally responsive to an ecology of other bodies through different sensory and gestural exchanges and modes of communication (olfaction, tactility, proprioception, kinaesthetic and so forth) or as Barad would call it through different intra-actions (Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015). Its capacity to sense and be touched by a multiplicity of impulses and intensities that register on our bodies without determining it, and that frequently escape our own conscious awareness, moves beyond and beneath what we traditionally understand as perception. Embodiment, thus how bodies come to experience the world "through their specifically placed and located body" (Ash & Gallacher, 2015, p. 69) then is something that is located in the in betweenness of our corporeal encounters with others who become sites of a "co-subjective circuit of feeling and sensation" (Fotaki, Kenny & Vacchani, 2017, p. 4; E. Manning, 2013). Such a trans-

corporeal conceptualization of the body allows me to unfold how embodied experience in cultural entrepreneurial processes is not a 'private affair' (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019), but emerges out of the intensive relation of human bodies with an ecology of others and within 'ecologies of encounter' (E. Manning, 2015; see also: Springgay, 2014).

The phenomenology of Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1968) has been particularly influential in foregrounding such an inter- or trans-corporeal understanding of embodiment. In his concern to put the 'body-subject' at the at the centre of what has otherwise been thought as abstract consciousness, he is taken up, critically discussed and stretched towards a 'posthuman phenomenology' by different contemporary vital materialist scholars (J. Bennett, 2001, 2010; Blackman, 2014; Coole, 2007; Dale & Latham, 2015). Merleau-Ponty (1962) emphasizes that subjectivity and knowledge emerge from the body-subject and its immersion in a sensuous and corporeal world. Embodiment and human experience then is inextricably interwoven with what he calls the 'flesh-of-the-world' (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). Both come into being through the "reciprocal insertion and intertwining of one in the other". Especially in his later writings as he moves further away from the humanistic cut between the human and the nonhuman and asks "where are we to put the limit between the body and the world, since the world is flesh?" (Merleau-Ponty, 1968, p. 138), he opens up to an understanding of embodiment as a field of sensible experience that is constantly co-constituted along its entanglement with nonhuman materialities (J. Bennett, 2010; Dale & Latham, 2015; E. Manning, 2013). Such a vital materialist understanding of embodiment allows us to take note of how in the process of cultural entrepreneuring it is often 'that it is not we who have things', but rather that things have us (Merleau-Ponty, 1968). It invites us to trace how in this process we are often 'touched by what we are near' (Ahmed, 2010a) and emphasizes the fact that how bodies are organized and oriented towards other bodies influences how certain things become significant and turn into objects 'as things that matter' (Ahmed, 2010b). It also sensitizes us for the ethical potentialities and complexities that emanate from this mutual interdependency of bodies by asking how we can avoid turning the difference of the other into a 'thing-for-me' (Introna, 2009), and by instigating us to articulate ways in which we can become accountable and responsible in these relationships and encounters (Barad, 2007; Dale & Latham, 2015).

The body's plastic boundary, its capacity and drive for change and augmentation, its longing to move in ecologies of encounter and connect to and assemble with other bodies also instructs my understanding of affect (Ash & Gallacher, 2015). On the one hand, I frame affect as those transpersonal intensities that arise, circulate and move in the midst of this 'in-between-ness' (Gregg & Seigworth, 2010) of an assemblage of human and nonhuman bodies. They colour and vibrate in the feelings and sensations that emanate from those inter- and transcorporeal encounters (or intra-actions), imbuing them with a particular 'affective tonality' (Ash & Gallacher, 2015; Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019). Affect is thus immanent to experience (O'Sullivan, 2001). It prompts visceral responses and forms of judgement "that do not necessarily pass through conscious awareness", but that reverberate in the verging and surging field of experience as 'bodily felt' and affective engagement (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 20; Massumi, 2002; Bell & Vachhani, 2020). An art installation created in a cultural entrepreneurial process can then be read as a 'bundle of affects' (O'Sullivan, 2001) or as Deleuze & Guattari (1994) would say a 'bloc of sensation' that moves and enfolds the various bodies that are connected to the art installation in a sociomaterial assemblage: the participants and collaborators, the objects and spaces, the colours and smells, the movements and textures.

On the other hand, affects as 'moments of intensity' articulate "corporeality as a […] series of emergent capacities" that continuously shapes a body's power or potential to affect and be affected (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 20; Bell & Vachhani, 2020; O'Sullivan, 2001). In a Deleuzo-Spinozian understanding of affect, which also instructs my own understanding, such an affective body is a complex composite (or assemblage) of relations of movement and rest, of speeds and slowness that "[…] moves as it feels and that feels itself moving" (Massumi, 2002, p. 1; Deleuze, 2017). Its affective capacity is constantly modulated through the connecting or mixing with other affective bodies in everyday lived encounters and shapes its heterogeneous agencies, thus "what a body can do in a given situation" (B. Anderson, 2014, p. 93). In the case of cultural entrepreneurship, the bodies of the entrepreneurs and the collaborators mix with other tangible bodies: video clips from former art projects, newly discovered artefacts, notions picked up from newspaper articles, LinkedIn posts, intriguing spaces, potential business partners, curious politicians. They also mix with ideational bodies like the idea of image, the imagination of a future intervention, the memory of a sensation. These encounters continuously shape the affective capacities and agencies

of the various bodies involved as affects are ongoing changes in the thresholds of the potential "to act and be acted upon" (Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020, p. 351).

Spinoza emphasizes that such encounters either increase a body's affective capacities, hence its power to act, by creating joyful affects that reverberate for instance in feelings such as anticipation, excitement or curiosity or diminish its affective capacities through eliciting sad passions that surface in feelings such as frustration, anxiety or contempt. In the case of cultural entrepreneurship, the encounter of the body of a local authority with the idea of a public art project might prompt a restlessness which (initially) increases her capacity to act, while the dynamic encounter of the entrepreneur's body with spaces, images, questions and laughter in a meeting with a potential collaborator surges in waves of anticipation, enthusiasm and consternation as an unsteady flow of increasing and decreasing capacities. Since bodies and assemblages in their constant affective alteration and modulation are driven by their conatus to "persevere in existing" (Deleuze, 1988, p. 98), they are moved by cultivating joyful encounters that affirm their force of existence and by warding off or transforming sad encounters and negative affections in order to endure and maintain the specific relations that are constitutive of their body-assemblages (J. Bennett, 2010; Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020). Because affective capacities are so crucial in shaping bodies' capacity for action and connection in holding together complex entrepreneurial assemblages, it seems relevant to understand how cultural entrepreneurship operates with and tries to modulate those affective capacities in the lived encounters and sociomaterial relations of its entrepreneurial processes and attempts at creating 'good' and 'bad' attachments (Latour, 1999a).

While affect as a transpersonal force moves bodies together and "cuts across subject positions" (Massumi, 2017, p. 109), it is important to keep in mind that the body in its fleshliness and pliability "is still something we each live through differently" (Lorimer, 2005, p. 89). Feminist scholars in particular have highlighted and called attention to the way bodies differ in their affective capacities and thresholds (cf. Militz & Schurr, 2016; Tolia-Kelly, 2006). After all, through different bodily histories, every body is its "own peculiar conjuncture of history, gender, ethnicity, age and education" (Waterton, 2013, p. 77), and also nonhuman bodies (objects, places, texts etc.) embody complex histories and trajectories that shape their affective capacities and thresholds (Barad, 2007; Grosz, 2008). Anderson (2014) labels this affective history of bodies as 'geo-

historicity'. Geo-historicity as a form of affective memory creates tendencies and different affective thresholds that organize how bodies might be affected by certain encounters. The prospect of being entangled in an art project might affect a young art teacher differently compared to a stressed businessman, a newly arrived migrant worker or an inquisitive elderly lady. As this affective memory of bodies in itself is dynamic and composed of a multiplicity of relations, it is constantly re-articulated with other memories that are barely known or hardly traceable (Quintana, 2019). Hence, every encounter is both a becoming and a site of potentiality that activates, generates and alters different bodily histories – reassembling thresholds and opening up and closing down different capacities (Militz & Schurr, 2016). Ultimately, as Deleuze (1988, p. 125) points out by famously reiterating Spinoza, we do not know beforehand "what a body or a mind can do, in a given encounter".

Affect thus also points us to the potentialities of bodies, since

> affective bodies are defined by their future capacities for action as well as their present abilities. That is, affective bodies are also constituted by what they can become and can do formed from distinctive bodily speeds, affects and encounters with other affective bodies. (Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020, p. 351)

It is this capacity of affect to transform bodies and their connective potentials and to open up and expand subjectivity (Fotaki, Kenny & Vacchani, 2017; Kenny & Fotaki, 2015; Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020) that makes an affective perspective particularly relevant for a critical and political reading of cultural entrepreneurship because as an indeterminate movement it "enables subjects to escape from forms of subjection, and potentially transform relations of domination" (Fotaki, Kenny & Vacchani, 2017, p. 9). While affect is also implicated in upholding dominant social structures, organizational scholars of affect emphasize that "interventions into the affective realm are essential for bringing about social change, not least because the embodied experience of affect and the excess it produces can throw our existing ways of knowing and being 'off-balance'; it can disturb us" (Fotaki, Kenny & Vacchani, 2017, p. 9). Researching how cultural entrepreneurship assembles and reassembles affective capacities thus also helps us to broaden our understanding of the importance of affective relations in articulating the emancipatory capacity of entrepreneurship and allows us to rearticulate its political capacity, how it might be able "to transform the world we live in" by creating different

and other affective encounters and movements (Hemmings, 2005, p. 550; Fotaki, Kenny & Vacchani, 2017).

3.3 Towards a vital material research onto-epistemology

The vital materialist conceptual apparatus which I have unfolded in the above sections articulates a different onto-epistemology of cultural entrepreneurship. For one, vital materialism is characterized by a flat, monist, non-anthropocentric ontology that distributes agencies between diverse bodies and matters and rejects traditional dichotomies of mind/body, human/nonhuman or nature/culture that still pervade and dominate much of the body of research on cultural entrepreneurship and MOS in general (Fox & Alldred, 2015b, 2018). Furthermore, as a relational or processual ontology it is interested in exploring the becoming and flux, the continuity and eventness which produce the world around us rather than its 'essence' (Bell & Vachhani, 2020). It is more concerned with the question of how (non)humans interact and is less concern with the question of what (non)humans are (Braidotti, 2006; Ulmer, 2017). Ultimately, a vital materialist ontology is affirmative in the sense that it is both critical and creative. It understands research as a form of experimental affirmative politics rather than a disengaged act of representation, and is concerned with how research performs reality, animates life worlds and opens up others for the articulation of different social orders or the creation and imagination of alternative political projects (Ulmer, 2017; Vannini, 2015b).

For the conceptual rearticulation of the subject of this research and of our research questions this means that rather than attending to entrepreneurial processes through individual bodies, subjects, experiences or sensations, we try to attend to them through the "assemblages of human and non-human, animate and inanimate […] and the affective flows within these assemblages" (Fox & Alldred, 2015b, p. 406). We are also less inclined to try to understand what cultural entrepreneurship actually is and are more interested in how the process of cultural entrepreneuring interacts and moves through "relational, material encounters and the affective engagements which they create" (Bell & Vachhani, 2020, p. 682). Finally, we are also less invested in critically representing the politics of entrepreneurship, but in surfacing other politics and political

projects which the vital materiality of cultural entrepreneurship might open us up to. With this onto-epistemology as a backbone and spring board for my own research trajectory, I thus investigate along what kinds of processes cultural entrepreneurship forges the sociomaterial relations that constitute its entrepreneurial assemblage and how it navigates the agencies and resistances that surface in its entanglement with other human and nonhuman bodies that constitute art worlds and their sociomaterial orders and boundaries. Second, I explore how cultural entrepreneurship assembles embodied experience along moving ecologies of encounter and along what kind of tactics it navigates the affective capacities that sustain the entrepreneurial assemblage as a particular ecology of encounter. Ultimately, across these two research questions, I also try to carve out what kind of critical affirmative politics we can evoke for cultural entrepreneurship as it (re)assembles these sociomaterial relations and affective capacities.

A vital materialist onto-epistemology not only rearticulates the way we understand and investigate the subjects of our research, it also rearticulates both our position as researchers and the position of the research (accounts) we create. Vital materialism is a 'transversal' onto-epistemology that emphasizes the performativity of all intra-actions and the continuous entanglement of matter and meaning, nature and culture, subject and object. It hence displaces

> the human researcher/observer from her/his central position (and hence as key arbiter) in the interaction between the world of events and the processes of research […]. Instead […] both events and research processes are considered as material, relational and interacting networks comprising human and nonhuman components (Fox & Alldred, 2015a, p. 1.3)

which produce knowledge that is partial and situated, entangled and affective (Gherardi, 2019; Haraway, 1988). This epistemological and ontological repositioning has considerable implications for our research practices and challenges scholars to not only rethink the methods that we use, but also the way we present our research endeavours. In the next chapter, I will explore the intricacies and complexities of such a vital materialist research methodology in more depth by mapping the research design along which I followed these research questions and co-articulated my study.



CEO: ‘You create many problems that we didn’t use to have.’
Frank explains: ‘We are artists, we create new perspectives.
It is about finding the unsought. Our role is to be agitators.’
CEO: ‘Ah, that’s reassuring. That’s fine then.’
Patrik counters: ‘Reassuring? That is not fine.’




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4 Inquiring artistic entrepreneurship: research design and affective methodology

One reason, amongst many others, why material agencies and affective intensities have been neglected in research so far is due to the notorious uncertainty about how they can be researched. The different streams of vital materialism, which I have mapped in the previous conceptual chapter, all stress the need to push methodology past its interpretivist register and 'unshackle' the research practices which currently dominate qualitative research designs (Gherardi, 2019; Lorimer, 2005; MacLure, 2013b; St. Pierre, 2018; Steyaert, 2011). Reflecting on contemporary shifts in social theory and ethnographic research practices in science and technology studies, Law (2008b) was probably one of first to address this issue. In his book 'After method: mess in social science research' he contends not only the performative, reality-producing capacity of scientific practices, but also the need of research to adapt to the ephemeral, embodied, fluid and unpredictable nature of social life. To do this, he argues, "[…]we will need to unmake many of our methodological habits, including: the desire for certainty; the expectation that we can usually arrive at more or less stable conclusions about the way things really are" (Law, 2008b, p. 9). In his book he foregrounds three notions: the idea of method as a 'method assemblage' and research as a 'style' of engaging with reality which produces and negotiates different 'goods'. These three notions also guide my own understanding of research (methodology) as a performative, embodied and messy process that involves a multiplicity of humans and nonhumans as it explores and at the same time animates life worlds.

For one, Law proposes the notion of method assemblage to give credit to the heterogeneous materialities (such as papers, computers, cell phones, people, places, coding software, voice memos, sounds, feelings, informal conversations), messy processes and practices (jotting fieldnotes, navigating group interviews, organizing field access, processing and analysing data) that shape research. He also uses this notion to emphasize the entanglements, fluidities, the multiplicities and indefiniteness that make up the 'hinterland' of research as an "indefinite, necessary, but hidden Otherness" (Law, 2008b, p. 14) – i.e. the aspects of the research process which constitute phenomena but usually do not show up in classic research reports or publications:

the personal craftmanship with which researchers deal with the many contingencies and uncertainties and the unruly relationships characteristic of research processes and qualitative research in particular (Bell & Willmott, 2019; Delamont & Atkinson, 2001; Fox & Alldred, 2015b). Method assemblages, according to Law (2008b, p. 15) "detect, resonate with, and amplify particular patterns of relation in the excessive and overwhelming fluxes of the real". They disclose certain realities while simultaneously being constitutive of their 'intra-active' becoming. Second, Law sketches the idea of research methodology and research methods as a style of engaging with the world, as world-making and as a way of being at the same time: "Method goes with work, and ways of working, and ways of being" (Law, 2008b, p. 10). Methods and methodology are thus not only about what kind of social science we want to make, but also about the kinds of people we want to be and about the kinds of worlds we want to live in. Style then, in my mind, is the active manner in which researchers engage with their method assemblages. It is what holds those assemblages together and allows researchers to navigate their complexities. Third, building on this, Law argues that research practices and method assemblages always negotiate and perform different goods. 'Truth' is such a good that is traditionally negotiated and enacted in a method assemblage since research is usually concerned with 'truth-making'. As method and its products in one way or another always participate in the struggle for better (or other) social and non-social arrangements, 'politics' is yet another good that is settled and concocted in method assemblage. Research and method are never innocent: they operate "to make certain (political) arrangements more probable, stronger, more real, whilst eroding others and making them less real" (Law, 2008b, p. 149). Eventually, Law suggests 'aesthetics' (the beautiful, the sensory and the imaginary) as a further good that is potentially at stake in research assemblages. In social science and the Euro-American metaphysics that usually operate at the hinterland of its method assemblages, aesthetics is often marginalized, and its powers of intriguing, moving and reenchanting people subdued for the fear of contaminating or subverting truth. Law not only instigates us to attend and make versions of the real that distribute agency more generously, treating material and bodies as more than passive, reacted upon or brute. He also challenges us to draw upon method assemblages that craft realities where sensuality and imagination can live alongside truth and politics, and where their intricate entanglement can be acknowledged and harnessed rather than discarded.

More recently, Bell and Willmott (2019) have proposed the notion of 'research-as-craft' in MOS to draw attention to the embodied, imaginative, political and ethical dimension of research practices. Echoing Law, they point out that there is no "unproblematic relationship between us and the world, including social scientific practices and its products, which results in a valid and reliable representation of the world" (May & Perry, 2017, p. 4; in: Bell & Willmott, 2019, p. 4). Rather, researchers are embodied beings who struggle imaginatively with the radical contingency, plurality and indeterminacy of the social world that shapes our organizational and personal lives. A social world that continuously resists the politics of ontic closure practiced by research, which tries to articulate something that (at least partially) transcends the world's proliferating multiplicity (Haraway, 1988). Being 'with' rather than 'in' the world, 'research-as-craft' encourages researchers to develop affective relationships between themselves and the research objects they engage with characterized by care and love (Kiriakos & Tienari, 2018) and enact forms of knowing which are "situated, partial, provisional and affective" (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019, p. 295). It invites researchers to engage critically and ethically with "the material and affective-political detail of situations as natural sites of knowledge making inhabited by particular fallible, vulnerable human beings" (Code, 2006, p. 117). Research-as-craft thus understands research as "a complex negotiation, taking place within specific, but shifting, contexts where power and meaning, 'personal' and 'political' are inseparable […] outcomes of power-fraught negotiation between 'self' and 'other'" (Kondo, 1990, p. 24). Understanding research as craft maps a process of knowledge production which is navigated along a 'gut feeling' and shaped by an "embodied receptiveness to how phenomena develop, and change throughout a process, requiring minute, subtle reactions and decisions" (Bell & Willmott, 2019, p. 10; see also: Hardy, 2004, p. 181). Method assemblages should be crafted around a pluralistic methodology, drawing upon theories "wherever one is able to find them" (Feyerabend, 1993, p. 33) and move along the intimate and sensuous relation with the material in the making. Similar to Law, Bell and Willmott's notion of research-as-craft thus articulates knowledge production as a work in progress that eschews the Cartesian body/mind binary by "surrendering to the material, following where it leads […]" (Bell & Willmott, 2019, p. 11) and opening up to "vitality, that mysterious richness" that is central to our common experience (Langer, 1989, p. 15). It draws awareness to the fact that the way we write research is "intertwined [with] aesthetic, moral and political dimensions that

themselves limit what is able to be said and to whom we are able to say it" (Rhodes, 2019, p. 26; Grey & Sinclair, 2006).

Following this double understanding of research as 'style' and 'craft', I will in the next few sections map how I crafted the method assemblage for this PhD research project and along which style of research I try to perform and negotiate truth, politics and aesthetics (and their entanglement) in this method assemblage. Indeed, truth might be the least important good performed in this research assemblage as Massumi (2013, p. xv) provocatively claims in his introduction to the translation of Deleuze & Guattari's 'A thousand Plateaus':

> The question is not: Is it true? But: does it work? What new thought does it make possible to think? What new emotions does it make possible to feel? What new sensations and perceptions does it open in the body?

Yet in this research methodology, I do not entirely want to give up the notion of truth as a particular "geography of what happens" in cultural entrepreneurship (Thrift, 2008: 2) and as a way of "increasing the ability of our ideas to deal with the diversity of what goes on in the world" (Becker, 1998, p. 7). At the same time, I also want to stay sensitive to how the research I do and the way it is done articulates, (re)produces and amplifies specific worlds (Steyaert, 2011), thus being attentive not only to the 'being' but also the becoming of cultural entrepreneurship as a research field and phenomenon in the "subtlety and ineffability of the interplay between researcher and researched" (Bell & Willmott, 2019, p. 13). In section 4.1, I will first introduce my research field and research case on which I base my data collection. Then in section 4.2, I will map my research design, which builds on an affective ethnography as a style of doing fieldwork that is attuned to material and affective relations and reflect on the research entanglements that structured my fieldwork. In section 4.3, I will discuss my analytic approach and process and in section 4.4, I will then map the different strategies I drew upon to present and presence my research in a resonating manner along this text. Finally, in section 4.5, I will briefly summarize this chapter and open it up to the two result chapters that will follow.

4.1 The empirical research setting: field and case

The empirical research setting is a central element of any qualitative method assemblage. In order to investigate the material processes and affective relations in cultural entrepreneuring and "the momentary, vicious, spirited, embodied, more-than-human, precognitive and non-discursive dimensions of spatially and temporally lived experience" that shape them (Rabbiosi & Vanolo, 2017, p. 270), I turn to the case of one particular enterprise in the field of visual art, the 'Atelier für Sonderaufgaben' [studio for special tasks, AfS][1] (Eisenhardt, 1989; Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007). Before choosing this case in the visual arts, I scouted several (micro-) enterprises in different sectors of the CCI as potential empirical settings by doing desk research and by tracking down cases within my own personal network. I looked for instance at a socially engaged theatre company in Zürich as well as a culturally and politically engaged coffee shop in Basel. Eventually, I chose to follow this small artistic enterprise located in Eastern Switzerland for several reasons. For one, the two brothers running the enterprise were immediately very welcoming when I contacted them in August 2016 about the prospect of doing research on and with them whereas the 'vibe' at the coffee shop, for instance, felt less warm and inviting. Moreover, the spatial proximity of the artistic enterprise encouraged me to choose it as a research setting because it would facilitate the kind of close and engaged fieldwork which I was interested in doing in order to zoom into the intricate processuality of such cultural entrepreneurial processes. A third factor that spoke in favour of the artistic enterprise was my own familiarity with the twin artists' work prior to starting my field research (for more details on my research relations, see section 4.2.2). Familiarity with a research setting is a double-edged sword. It can also render it difficult for a researcher to perceive the dynamics in a social setting with 'fresh eyes' and cloud her receptiveness towards those aspects in the empirical field which are particularly striking. However, in the case of this research, I felt it actually helped me to better handle the networked complexity and fluidity of the organizational and collaborative processes in cultural entrepreneurship because I already had an intuitive knowledge of and sensibility for the basic organizational processes and key players of the research setting.

[1] Due to the (material) specificity of the art enterprise and its projects, the enterprise, the case and the founders are not anonymized in the following case description and throughout the study.

The visual arts are a suitable research field for inquiring cultural entrepreneurship as they are haunted by and emphasize many of the tensions, conflicts and struggles which are characteristic for cultural entrepreneurship in general. With the decline of public funding in the wake of neoliberalist policies since the 1990s, visual artists are increasingly crafted as 'innovative entrepreneurs' and expected to engage in entrepreneurial labour "to support – or even create – their artistic work" (Win, 2014, p. 9). The spaces of visual art are continuously expanding beyond the white cube or the formal gallery setting into the virtual sphere via platforms such as Instagram, Tumblr, Facebook and YouTube, or developing along socially collaborative practices where visual artists use "social situations to produce dematerialized, antimarket, politically engaged projects that carry on the modernist call to blur art and life" (Win, 2014, p. 8). As a result, visual artists are expected to engage directly with the commercial and entrepreneurial aspects of art: art which can cater to various purposes from supporting marketing communication to being a vehicle for social change and develop into various 'slash/artist' projects (Fillis, 2006; Navaie, 2004; Weckerle, Grand, Martel, Page & Schmuki, 2018). They are encouraged to learn how to fund their work by "micro-fundraising through their personal networks, promoting their own 'brand', selling their artwork directly to the public" or "to collaborate with social service agencies as forms of socially engaged practices" and network with the corresponding institutional stakeholders (Win, 2014, p. 3). Education in entrepreneurial practices, while not yet everywhere whole-heartedly embraced, is becoming more and more established as an integral part of contemporary visual art school curricula (Beckman, 2007; Bridgstock, 2013; Gangi, 2015). In their entrepreneurial trajectories, visual artists are challenged to create art that connects to artistic visions as well as potential audiences (Fillis, 2006) while staying distinctive in a field that in the digital age is increasingly crowded by amateur productions. They are confronted with a growing expectation of professionalism and need to navigate the balance between finding income and pursuing creative expression while struggling with fitting pricing and business models for their aesthetic labour (S. Bennett, Rahman, Fuller-Love, & Mcguire, 2018). Like many enterprises in the field of the CCI, enterprises in the field of visual art are frequently so-called micro-businesses with not much more than two regular employees. They often prefer to remain small in order to preserve their independence and organizational flexibility with regards to the different projects and fluctuating revenue streams on which they operate (Sundbo, 2011; Weckerle, Grand, Martel, Page & Schmuki, 2018).

The AfS, which is also such a micro-enterprise, was founded in 1999 by the concept artists and twin brothers Frank and Patrik Riklin during their visual art studies. Over the past twenty years, the enterprise has built a reputation for creating intriguing artistic projects and interventions outside of the classic museum space by collaborating in at times transformative ways with other companies, organizations, institutions and communities (Beyes & Steyaert, 2012). Their work is known to create involvement, surprising imagery and catchy stories as well as a considerable amount of media visibility, being featured and discussed in a wide range of print media from day press to art and business magazines and airing on national and international television. Projects are funded by collaboration partners as well as foundations and public money. Over the years, the two twin artists have also developed a standing for being inspirational speakers, engaging experts, consultants or 'ghost coaches'. They are regularly invited by banks, marketing agencies, government institutions, branding and entrepreneurship conferences and educational institutions to present their artwork and inspire and challenge others to rethink their own approaches and mindsets. This activity has grown into an increasingly relevant economic pillar for AfS, providing a financial backbone that helps them balance the uncertainty and financial risk of their bigger art productions. While the AfS draws upon a network of other organizations and freelancers in the CCI as well as volunteers to realize their artworks and projects, the two artists are still the only two regular and full-time employees of their company and have just recently started working with two interns.

The art and enterprise of the AfS is driven by the twin artists' desire to playfully stage, intervene in and disrupt the routines of everyday life as well as by their conviction that art should be located in the middle of society – that it can be uncompromising and yet have an impact beyond its aesthetic appeal. When they discuss the relaunching of their homepage, they note on the big blackboard in the studio: 'Our Mission: art where you don't expect it.' In their function as collaborators and artistic service providers they like to frame their role as 'deliberate subversivators' and put the (artistic) content before their clients. One of the artists points out: "Art is clear but not dismissive." As slash-artists, their artwork oscillates between installation, performance as well as action art and visual storytelling and often interweaves these different mediums and approaches within the conceptualization and staging of a single piece (Weckerle, Grand, Martel, Page & Schmuki, 2018). An installation, for instance, becomes the material setting for a participative action or happening. The performance creates surprising dynamics

and intriguing images which circulate as visual storytelling in the form of videos or photographs on different online platforms. Over the years, the artistic enterprise has developed a distinctive style and language characteristic for its work (Elsbach, 2009). The AfS' work thrives on participation and the creation of what they call 'unusual communities' and operates with an inventive language as well as through the production of aestheticized images that frequently include the artists' 'twin-body' as well as quirky documentations of comical everyday interactions. Its artistic concepts often play with 'unusual actions', utopian visions and uneconomic value creation. The brothers claim in particular the everyday poetics, humor and playfulness of the action sculptures and video art of the contemporary Swiss artists Roman Signer as an important influence for their own work (Butler & Signer, 2008). Curators and experts often draw upon Josef Beuys' notion of the 'social sculpture' (Biddle, 2014) to describe their art or classify it by comparing them to the social subversion of the Situationist movement in the 60s (Bonnett, 1989) or the guerilla activism of the art collective 'Yes Men' in the 90s (Dey & Mason, 2018).

Over the years, the AfS has established itself as brand and artistic enterprise that produces artworks outside of the confinements of the classic art field and particularly in the past five years, their entrepreneurial endeavour has also started to create more stable and sustained financial returns. However, its entrepreneurial and artistic configuration has been an ongoing development over the past two decades. In the next sections, I will briefly trace the AfS' entrepreneurial trajectory by following its artistic milestones and by introducing some of the core projects that will also figure in my study. I will discuss the AfS' history along three phases of its entrepreneurial evolution: the phase from 1973 to 1999, which encompasses the formative collaborative experiences of the two artists in their childhood and youth and during their art studies prior to founding the AfS, the phase from 1999 to 2008, which explores the entrepreneurial beginnings of the AfS as well as the establishment of the twin artists in the art field, and the phase from 2008 to 2019, in which the AfS distances itself from the art field and slowly starts to carve out a new entrepreneurial identity and position. The case description builds on the empirical material that I collected in the interviews and conversations with two artists about the history and evolution of the AfS as well as the private and public documentation of this process in photographs, newspaper articles, theses and most recently a TV documentary. Of course, there are various ways how one could tell and cluster the history and evolution of this case. I chose to craft it

along these three phases as both the founding of the AfS and the creation of the Null Stern Hotel [zero star hotel] were pivotal markers and catalysers of the bigger arch of their entrepreneurial trajectory. Within the phases, I then focused on those projects and developments that allowed me best to illustrate this evolution and the artistic ideas that underpinned it.

1973 – 1999: early traces. The history of the AfS started long before its actual foundation in 1999 and traces back to the childhood and youth of the twin brothers. From the age of eight onwards, Frank and Patrik construct huts in the forest nearby. Over the years and with the knowledge they gain in their apprenticeships as building draftsmen, these cabins transform into multi-story lodges, built from materials which they steal from construction sites at night (image 2). Eventually, this creative endeavour is put to a halt by the local authorities, who force the brothers and their group of 'accomplices' to tear down the illegal constructions. The AfS references the cabin building phase in the forest as formational for their later entrepreneurial and artistic trajectory. It is where they first start to materialize their own world and play with boundaries. Looking for more creative liberty while forgoing their love for theatre, they eventually decide to pursue studies in the field of visual arts. Frank studies at the Zurich and Berne Universities of the Arts in Switzerland and Patrik at the University of the Arts in Berlin and at the Academy of Fine Arts in Frankfurt am Main in Germany. While Frank focuses on painting and is immediately successful yet not entirely convinced of the medium (image 3), Patrik starts to experiment with video art in an attempt at differentiating himself from his three minutes older brother. Their first collaborative work emerges by coincidence in 1997 when they are invited to do an artistic performance together for the Christmas calendar of a culturally engaged pub. In the performance, they are both filmed as they are locked in two separate rooms while doing different tasks determined by the audience. The visuality of this double image and the surprising (a)synchronicity with which the two brothers act is perplexing and intriguing, even for Frank and Patrik themselves. It motivates them to put to rest their artistic rivalry and further explore their collective aesthetic capacity. In 1998, they rent a bigger studio space together and start working collaboratively with video as a central medium. The first conceptual artwork they produce in the timespan of twenty-four hours is called 79 Schlafzimmer [seventy-nine bedrooms]. The AfS walks around in the city and rings doorbells to find seventy-nine people from different social backgrounds who are willing to film their own bedroom with the camera they get from the brothers. The

resulting film is presented at a single event only. As the bedrooms are anonymized, the participants and friends who are part of the artwork and come to the showing do not know whose bedroom they are looking at. The AfS sells the video cassette as an object which is sealed between two iron plates. It allows its owner to re-access the intimate story merely if he destroys the object violently.



Image 2. Frank, Patrik and friends in the process of cabin building
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben

Q3



Image 3. Frank working on a painting series for his first solo exhibition
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben

1999 – 2008: entrepreneurial beginnings and establishment in the art field. When Frank and Patrik eventually found the AfS in 1999 while they are still studying art, it is "a container without content, just a label", as one of the artists puts it in the documentary. However, they very quickly decide that the AfS could articulate a vessel that brings together art and services. In those early years, the AfS, for instance, offers a range of impromptu (butler) services and supports. Dressed in their white 'special tasks' jumpers (image 4), the AfS goes snow shovelling for an elderly lady, organizes a publicity stunt on a city square for a local museum or creates video ads and documentations for exhibitions and private events. The AfS also gives seminars on 'video art and the perfect dilettantism' as well as hosting a butler school for butlering in unusual spaces. At the same time, it pursues bigger artistic (special) works. In 2004, for instance, it realizes *Das kleinste Gipfeltreffen der Welt* [the smallest summit of the world]. In this project, for which research starts in 2002, they visit and bring together the six mayors of the smallest politically autonomous municipalities of Switzerland and its neighboring countries for a summit of the smallest powers of Europe on a mountain top in Eastern Switzerland. The work is conceptualized as a counter image to the G-8 and a poetic reimagination of the contemporary practice of political summits

(image 6). The artistic process materializes itself in videos, images and a book. As an artistic promotional strategy, the AfS establishes *Freunde & Gäste* [friends & guests] as a regular happening in their studio space. The first twelve friends and strangers who arrive at the studio space are invited to spend the evening together at the in-house bar (image 5). As money is scarce, the studio space is at the same time also the residence of the two artists in the first couple of years. While they continue to establish themselves in the art field via exhibitions, they also start first collaborations with the public sector, for instance in their projects *Stadtelefon* [city telephone] *Raumkultur* [space culture], or *Rheinuferpassage* [Rhine river bank passage], where they create a public access to the river bank through an impromptu blocking of the highway traffic (image 7). Indeed, they feel increasingly constrained and alienated by the structures of the classic art sector. Patrik notes:

> I am not interested in how art is practiced and talked about in art museums, a little bit elitist and intellectual. I mean, that is the 'bel-esprit', I respect that, but for my work it wasn't so stimulating. I actually didn't understand my work myself when somebody spoke about it [like that], that was quite interesting.



Image 4. The twin artists en route for a special task
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben



Image 5. Polaroid series documenting the unusual community at 'Freunde und Gäste'
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben



Image 6. Six mayors gathered on a Swiss mountain top at 'Das kleinste Gipfeltreffen der Welt'
Credits: Stefan Rohner



Image 7. A view through the temporary 'Rheinuferpassage'
Credits: Anna-Tina Eberhard

2008 – 2019: distancing from the art field and new entrepreneurial identity. While the AfS initially attempts to distinguish their artistic from their service-oriented work, calling the latter 'earmarked' special tasks, the *Null Stern Hotel* [zero star hotel], which the AfS realizes in 2008, is the first artwork that consciously starts to blur this boundary. The AfS develops the concept after the call of a municipality looking for a way to repurpose an empty nuclear bunker. Working with vintage beds and lamps from torn down hotels, they transform the bare bunker into a *zero star hotel* and invite a few locals to test-sleep it. With the pictures of this performance, they release a press statement which announces the opening of the very first *zero star hotel*, word of which quickly spreads around the world. The unexpected resonance and transformative capacity which the artwork articulates outside of the museum is a catalyst that drives the AfS towards distancing itself more and more from the art field and moving towards a new artistic and entrepreneurial identity. Together with a hospitality professional, they develop and protect the *zero star hotel* as an international brand and start an ongoing journey to transform and institute the artwork into a business model (image 8). In response to the medial success of the *zero star hotel*, the two brothers, who now playfully call themselves CEOs, are approached by more inquiries to collaborate from businesses and public organizations. In 2011 they conceptualize another long-term collaborative project for a communal development agency with their *BIGNIK* project. In reminiscence of the textile past of the region, they create a modular, continuously growing picnic blanket for the whole of Eastern Switzerland. Each year volunteers donate cloth in shades of red and white and sew the material into square modules. Once a year, on a dry Sunday in June, the *BIGNIK* is assembled somewhere in Eastern Switzerland, forming an ever-growing amorphous picnic blanket (image 9). The artistic vision of the project aims at carrying on until 2043, creating a blanket that eventually comprises a module per inhabitant of the region.

The performance *Fliegen retten in Deppendorf* [Saving Flies in Deppendorf] which the AfS realizes in 2013 with a German insecticide producer is another work that is pivotal in shaping its entrepreneurial self-understanding. The entrepreneur initially wants to hire the AfS to create a marketing campaign for his latest fly trap. Instead, the performance and collaboration instigate him to transform his business model towards the conservation of insect biodiversity, and over the years earn him several business and ethics prizes. The performance demonstrates and convinces the AfS once more of the impact and potential which their work has because it is happening outside of the

traditional art field. Yet, in the years to follow, many of their collaborative projects and efforts also fail or fall apart. For instance, the collaboration with a building cooperation for which the AfS develops the *Social Urban Zone* [SUZ] as an interplay of artistic interventions geared towards enlivening and disrupting the everyday interactions of the inhabitants of a newly built residential complex creates a big public dispute and eventually fades out (image 10). As the two brothers explore this new artistic and entrepreneurial position, they keep reflecting on their shifting artistic identity with different audiences. In 2012, the AfS organizes an international speakers' tour on *the changing role of artists in society*. Later the two brothers coin and start using the notion of 'artonomy' to discuss their work at the intersection between art and other social fields. With the increasing visibility and popularity of their projects, more business opportunities surface for them to operate as speakers, inspirers, sparring partners, lecturers and coaches, and the AfS reinstates the *Treffen ohne Grund* [Meeting for no reason] as an informal networking event and a larger-scale successor of *friends & guests* once or twice a year in their studio. Over time, they also create different associations as legal vehicles to support the acquisition and management of the finances for their various collaborative projects. Eventually, in 2019, together with the former CEO of a digital media agency, Frank and Patrik found the *Artonomie AG* as a corporate spin-off of the AfS and a social sculpture geared towards creating more unusual actions and ruptures in the system of economy and everyday life (image 11). In a conversation, one of the artists reflects: "Sure, the market for our way of thinking and acting has become much bigger in the past years. From an entrepreneurial perspective, we entered the right field."



Image 8. Butler grooming the rooms of the 'Null Stern Hotel', 2009
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben



Image 9. Bird's eye view of the long-term participative art project ‚BIGNIK'
Credits: Helikopter-Service Triet AG



Image 10. Children appropriating the drinking fountian of the 'SUZ'
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben



Image 11. The founding of the 'Artonomie AG' on the rooftop of a parking garage in Zürich
Credits: Claudio Baeggli

This tracing of the entrepreneurial trajectory of the AfS shows how the enterprise moves slowly from a mainstream to a maverick or even amphibious position in the art field as it tries to "develop new creative practices and processes that are recognized as such by peers, gatekeepers and audiences" (Candace Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen & Townley, 2016, p. 755). It also emphasises how this entrepreneurial position is developing along the twin artists' desire to create art with an impact beyond the confines and norms that dominate the art field and the heterogeneous opportunities which open up to them in their entrepreneurial role as 'innovative collaborators'. It thus qualifies the AfS as an exemplary case for researching those emancipatory entrepreneurial dynamics and politics in the CCI which I discussed in chapter 2. The historic trajectory of the AfS also points to the tensions and challenges that arise as cultural entrepreneurs try to pursue their artistic visions within and alongside those collaborative networks. Moreover, we already get a sense of the role of sociomaterial relations, affective forces and embodied feelings in the organization and evolution of this entrepreneurial process as the AfS tries to carve out a new entrepreneurial position while at the same time staying intelligible as artistic venture. The development thus articulates an important processual backdrop on which my empirical analyses will build in order to explore in more detail how cultural entrepreneurship navigates and shapes these collaborative networks by (re)organizing sociomaterial relationships and by moving affective capacities.

4.2 Creating affective data: methods and research design

In the past decade, in particular the 'affective' and 'more-than-representational' research practices developed in cultural geography (Latham & McCormack, 2009; Rabbiosi & Vanolo, 2017; Vannini, 2015b) and the debates around 'post-qualitative methodologies' in the field of education (Benozzo, Carey, Cozza, Elmenhorst, Fairchild, Koro-Ljungberg & Taylor, 2019; Coleman & Ringrose, 2013; Lather & St. Pierre, 2013; MacLure, 2013b) have been influential for thinking and practicing 'inventive methods' (Lury & Wakeford, 2012) that allow us "to better to cope with our self-evidently more-than-human, more-than-textual, multisensual worlds" in the method assemblages that we craft (Lorimer, 2005, p. 83). For the purpose of this research I draw upon Gherardi's (2019) notion of an affective ethnography which builds on the methodological

debates and concerns around the (more-than-representational) turn to affect and post-qualitative methodologies to rethink organizational ethnography. An affective ethnography is particularly well suited for a vital material exploration of cultural entrepreneurship as it situates research in the teeming everyday settings in which we live and organize (Ulmer, 2017; Vannini, 2015b) and invites scholars "to return to their sense of wonder, astonishment and curiosity by becoming entangled with their environments" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 839). It allows me as a researcher to "attend to what is happening" (St. Pierre, 2011, p. 623) – moving towards and becoming immersed in relations, doings, events and affects (Vannini, 2015b) rather than enclosing me in predefined recipes or exhaustive methodological structures for the purpose of creating purified and rigid data.

4.2.1 Affective ethnography as a style of fieldwork

An affective ethnography is a 'style' of doing ethnographic fieldwork. The notion of style is used by Gherardi (2019) because, in tune with the methodological reflections of Law (2008b) and Bell & Willmott (2019), it emphasizes field research not as a technical set of procedures which articulate the truth of the ethnographer who has 'been there', but as an activity which is crafted and arranged artfully. It is performative and always could have been done differently as it navigates truth, politics and aesthetics. An affective ethnography places particular focus on sociomateriality, the body, and aesthetic-embodied knowing and the way they are 'becoming' together in activities and practices, co-constituting each other's vitality (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; Gherardi, 2019) as well as making things "visible, audible, tangible, knowable" (Mol, 2002, p. 23). Hence, it is well suited as a research methodology for tracing and understanding the role of sociomaterial relations and affective capacities in cultural entrepreneurial processes and challenges me as a researcher to 'be with' and 'become with' fieldwork. It acknowledges that all elements of fieldwork – "texts, actors, materialities, language, agencies – are already entangled in complex ways and that they should be read in their intra-actions, through one another, as data in motion/data that move" (Gherardi, 2019, p. 742).

Creating such data in an affective ethnography thus always entails the interplay and performative relation between the tryptic of what I call the 'affective body' of the researcher, the 'agentic assemblage' of the field and the 'method assemblage' that

shapes and navigates their relation. As affect is something that is registered by the body (rather than happening there), the researcher body and the embodied researcher in the field are central for an affective ethnography (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019; Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015). As a researcher, I use my own bodily capacity or rather the capacities of my 'body-assemblage' (Gherardi, 2017b; E. Manning, 2010) to attune myself to and resonate with the intensities and affective relations unfolding in the field, trying to experience "what affects and is affected" within certain field situations and at the same time learning to affect and be affected by the field (Militz & Schurr, 2016, p. 57; Gherardi, 2017b, 2019). Attunement as a methodological instrument and relational practice is about "sensitizing our bodies to appreciate and understand the complex material forces that structure situations, beyond the envelope of human emotions" (Ash & Gallacher, 2015, p. 72). It entails a quasi-intentional willingness of myself as a researcher to engage with and sense the 'ordinary affects' (Stewart, 2007) and sociomaterial relations at play in the field by paying attention to how cultural entrepreneurial activities assemble "in shared experiences, everyday routines, fleeting encounters, embodied movements, precognitive triggers, practical skills, affective intensities, enduring urges, unexceptional interactions and sensuous dispositions" (Lorimer, 2005, p. 84). An affective ethnography thus tunes into the vital material dimensions of social life less by designing innovative new tools for data collection as they have been proposed by some affect scholars (Knudsen & Stage, 2015; Lury & Wakeford, 2012), but rather by systematically

> re-calibrating and re-directing the variously mediated ways of observing and participating in social life that social scientists employ to find out what people do. […] [I]t is about focusing on different scales of movement in order to become attuned to what is happening in a situation in a new way (Ash & Gallacher, 2015, pp. 73–75)

by using our researcher bodies as living recorders (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019). In my fieldwork, attunement was a subtle and at the same dynamic instrument which constantly invited me to be sensitive to how I register my own sensory experience: the smells, tastes, sounds, textures, rhythms, intensities and ordinary affects emanating from situations and encounters. It challenged me to observe the way that material settings, doings and sayings entangle, clash and enmesh with my own and other bodies while I am immersed in field situations and encounters. On the one hand, my attunement was guided by registering what is happening in the field by focusing on the doings, voices, materialities, relations and affects and

their entangled unfolding in the field along a series of sensitizing questions which I developed building on and translating suggestions made by Vannini (2015b) for my own research purpose (see table 1). On the other hand, each situation and encounter in the field called for a slightly different and at times also shifting attunement that focused on a specific type of interplay between these dimensions. At the public sewing events, for instance, I focused on how the materialities by which the bodies are enveloped shape the bodily relations, affects and doings, while in meetings I was more attuned to the voices, bodily relations and affective intensities that were unfolding. Although I usually shifted this attunement organically along the unfolding situation in the field, I also varied it more intentionally when I felt that certain aspects started to reiterate, tuning into more marginal aspects or dimensions of a situation. As this attunement is very much dependent on the researcher's bodily capacities to sense and feel 'difference' and 'movement' (Ash & Gallacher, 2015), I tried to be present with my own bodily capacities, taking note of how my own embodied being and its dispositions and histories shape my attunement in the field and by being conscious of what "happens to us as persons and researchers when we put ourselves inside the practices we study" (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019, p. 295) – how we ourselves are affected and affect others. Over time, I learned to consciously step in and out of fieldwork by using a brief breathing exercise to ground myself before and after field visits and by allocating enough room to prepare for and process the complex embodied experience which it entailed. This helped me manage the feeling of being sensually assaulted that fieldwork often elicits in me. I also started to grasp that although I frequently gave my opinion with regards to certain issues in the entrepreneurial process and although my (engaged) presence in a few instances also created frictions in the field situation (for more details see the next section 4.2.2), the entrepreneurial process had a discrete momentum that affected me more than I was able to affect it. My opinions, for instance, while being carefully considered, did not weigh more than the many other opinions which the artists consulted (and rejected) while debating and reflecting certain decisions. This understanding pacified my casually surging sense of guilt for my perceived overactive role in the fieldwork and encouraged me to listen and trust my gut feeling as to how much and what kind of engagement would be situationally productive, and in turn feel more at ease with the effects that my presence created.

Table 1. Research sensibilities guiding the field attunements

foci	examples of sensitizing field questions
doings	What is happening? What are the are entrepreneurs / collaborators / volunteers doing? Who (human, nonhuman) is involved in and affected by those 'doings'?
voices	What is being said and how / with what kind of intensity? Who (human, nonhuman) is involved in / referred to / affected by those voices? What kind of concern / experience is expressed?
materiality	What kinds of sensations (sounds, smells, textures etc.) and what kinds of images, objects, spaces and places enfold the voices and doings? How are others and I affected by them?
relations	What kind of (bodily) relations with humans and nonhumans are enacted? What affective forces shape those relations? How are those relations created and shaped through voices, doings and materiality?
affects	What intensities are palpable? What kinds of moods, rhythms, atmospheres, desires and movements can I register in myself and others? How do they relate to the doings, voices, materialities and bodily relations present?

While attunement organizes 'how' a researcher tries to be present while she is immersed in fieldwork in order to create data in motion, an affective ethnography also implies navigating 'where' those encounters happen while she traces a research problem in the imbrication of the field as "an agentic assemblage of diverse elements that are constantly intra-acting, never stable, never the same" (Gherardi, 2017a, p. 354). As the artistic enterprise and its projects were spatially distributed and constantly on the move, the affective ethnography was 'multi-sited', following the entrepreneurial process along its different locations and localities (Falzon, 2016; Law, 2008a). Taking note of what Gherardi (2019) calls 'affective placeness', thus the atmospheres, kinaesthetic sensations and different sociomaterial relationships which unfold in certain spatial settings and shape organizational processes was a central aspect of my fieldwork. After all, this not only took place in the studio space of the artistic enterprise, but also in various meetings rooms, restaurants and bars in Berne, Zurich, Aarau, Baden, Trogen, Rorschach, St. Margrethen, Solothurn and St. Gallen, at regional airports, on rooftops and in underground parking lots, in unassuming suburbs, on scenic hills and in wet fields, as well as on the various train and car rides or fast paced walks that brought us there and back.

As the entrepreneurial project was constantly on the move, I organized my presence in the field around events linked to certain projects and paired this with checking in and following the entrepreneurial process more generally by attending smaller everyday

events in the field. The heart of my fieldwork took place between September 2017 and September 2019 with some preliminary fieldwork in 2016 and follow-up visits in late 2019 and the beginning of 2020 (see figure 1). In this period, I followed what I considered the two main ongoing projects of the AfS, the *BIGNIK* and the *zero star hotel*. Furthermore, I trailed three emerging entrepreneurial collaborations (which eventually stalled) with an energy provider (Sept. 2016 – March 2017), with a spatial planning agency (Oct. 2017 – May 2018) and a peace village (Jan. 2018 – Sept 2018) as well as two emerging projects which are still running: the collaboration with a pension fund (Oct. 2018 – now) and the founding of a spin-off enterprise (Feb 2019 – now). I chose this double focus on ongoing and emerging projects for one because I was interested in tracing not only how the AfS navigates existing projects and collaborations, but also in how it tries to forge new ones. Second, following those emerging as well as ongoing projects was also a safety measure as in the phase in which I started and intensified my fieldwork, many of the projects and entrepreneurial collaborations were fragile. The way they would materialize themselves in the future was uncertain, even for projects which the AfS had pursued for many years. The opportunities for continuous fieldwork in certain projects were thus constantly emerging and evaporating, complicating an early research focus with regards to specific projects. The *BIGNIK*, for instance, was organized but cancelled both in 2016 and 2018. Also, when I launched my fieldwork in the middle of 2017, it was still unclear whether and in what form the AfS would continue to pursue the *zero star hotel*, a question that kept being revisited throughout my two years of fieldwork.

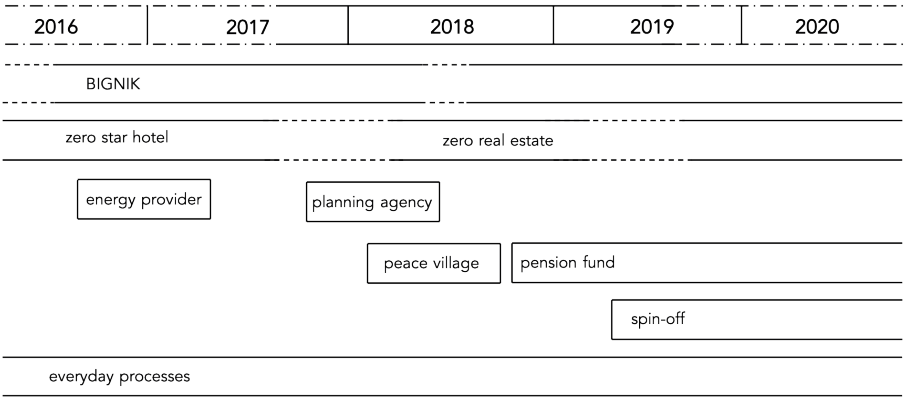


Figure 1. Overview of the fieldwork along the different projects and activities of the AfS

An affective ethnography, in some way, is always a 'methodology of encounters' (Bell & Vachhani, 2020; McCoy, 2012). As I navigated the agentic assemblage of the field, I structured my fieldwork and the field materials I gathered around three different types of field encounters: shadowing, documentary work and interviewing. For an overview of the field material see table 2 (for a more in-depth documentation of the field encounters check the appendix).

Table 2. Overview of the three main types of field encounters and the field material gathered

field encounters	field materials
shadowing	13 planning meetings and information events specifically on the BIGNIK, 17 days of general field work with discussions on the BIGNIK, 2 days at the sewing station, 1 day at the mounting of the blanket between September 2017 and August 2019.
documentation	emails, conceptual papers, meeting protocols, video documentation and production, photographs and newspaper articles available publicly or via the archive of the AfS.
interviews	2 group discussions with 13 participants (49:16min to 1:48:37h, total 2:27:35h) between August 2018 and September 2019. 3 individual interviews (32:50min to 1:44:26h, total 3:40:16h) between August 2019 and March 2020. 19 field interviews with 1 to 5 people (01:22min to 12:30min, total 1:35:19h) at the information event, public sewing event and the mounting of the BIGNIK between April 2019 and July 2019.

'Shadowing' these projects and processes around the everyday activities of the AfS was the cornerstone of how I assembled and navigated my affective ethnography as "field work on the move" (Czarniawska, 2008, p. 17). Following the two brothers in the organization of their everyday entrepreneurial life allowed me to become attuned to the actual work they do in and along the entrepreneurial process and its different projects (Bruni, 2005). It gave me intimate and tangible access to the complex organizational assemblage and sociomaterial relations in which this work is embedded and which it creates, as well as the affective forces that circulate in and emanate from those relations. The process of shadowing opened up the opportunity for countless informal conversations with the collaborators, partners, volunteers and participants who were entangled in the entrepreneurial process. At the same time, it also gave me an intimate insight into the different concerns and experiences that organize the various activities of AfS, since the two brothers continually and openly voiced and wanted to reflect on what was happening to them with me as I was accompanying them on the way to or on the way home from certain field events. In the beginning and

the end of the fieldwork, I recorded a few of these conversations and organized them in a more structured way to discuss and reflect the artists' experience and concerns with regard to the evolution of the different projects and the artistic enterprise as a whole in a more coherent manner.

To complement and contextualize the data and insights I gained from shadowing, I drew upon documentary material: emails, conceptual papers, minutes, video material, photographs and newspaper articles documenting the entrepreneurial processes and projects of the AfS, which were either publicly available or made available to me by the AfS and its archive. The AfS provided me with meeting minutes, for instance, or forwarded me the mail traffic they had with collaborators and sent me drafts of presentations, early conceptual papers as well as photographs they took on their outings. This material trace supported me in following the development of projects and filled some of the empirical gaps created when I was not able to participate in important field events or meetings. Furthermore, it allowed me to get access to the history of the projects and the entrepreneurial process prior to the start of my data collection. For instance, the art degree thesis which Frank wrote in 2003 and which documents and reflects in detail the entrepreneurial and artistic set up of the AfS at that point gave me valuable insights into the evolution of the AfS. Or the documentation of the early conceptual and collaborative process around the *BIGNIK* already carved out and reflected concerns which would resurface throughout the collaborative processes as I followed it. The video documentations (for instance of prior *BIGNIK* events) were helpful in order to confirm and contrast the impressions I gathered from my own fieldwork. Finally, engaging with and digging up this material trace of the entrepreneurial processes and projects also frequently prompted interesting reflections and comments from the artists themselves as they were handing and showing it to me during fieldwork.

Additionally, to decentre my fieldwork from the orbit of the two brothers and in order to access data beyond the 'shadow' and current work of the AfS, I chose to record interviews with collaborators and participants in the two core projects of the AfS: the *BIGNIK* and the *zero star hotel*. In each project, I gathered interview data in two rounds of group discussions with people that experienced and/or were involved in the projects. One group discussion was grounded in the current experience of the event and organization of the *BIGNIK* and the *zero star hotel* and took place amidst

the organization of the projects. Another group discussion focused on the long-term process of organizing those projects. It drew upon 'photo-elicitation' as a visual method to present the complex material assemblage and trajectory of the project to the discussion participants, who were at times already a bit more removed from the organizational process (Harper, 2002; Latham & McCormack, 2009). Each group discussion consisted of six to eight people with a stratified set of participants (local authorities, volunteers, partners, collaborators, farmers, participants, journalists) who had experienced and/or were involved in the project. Additionally, I did follow-up and individual interviews with collaborators when the integration into the focus groups was not feasible or when a more in-depth perspective was needed. Furthermore, in my fieldwork in the *BIGNIK* project I did brief interviews of two to twelve minutes with participants and residents during information events, sewing sessions and *BIGNIK* assembly. These short interviews helped me elicit more explicit accounts of the lived and felt experiences of the various participants and volunteers involved and affected by the project and the work of the AfS. While some affect researchers remain sceptical regarding the capacity of words to capture bodily becomings (Blackman & Venn, 2010; Clough, 2009), I assume that such 'voices' and 'voicings' are themselves effects and affections of moving human-nonhuman entanglements and milieus (Mazzei, 2013). They do not emanate from a singular subject, but are produced "in an enactment among researcher-data-participants-theory-analysis" (Mazzei, 2013, p. 733). As such, they allowed me to trace from a different angle 'what affect does' (Gherardi, 2019) and access the meaning-making processes that are opened up by affective movements and bodily experiences beyond the confinement of the individual or personal (Mazzei, 2013; Wetherell, 2012). The group discussions allowed for such accounts to emerge collectively and relationally, while individual interviews opened up space for more in-depth explorations, and field interviews captured in-the-moment reflections and experiences.

Documenting and recording these different type of field encounters is a central element of the ethnographic research practice (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). While shadowing, I 'jotted' down my field observations and experiences into my notebook or later, when convenient, directly into the data processing program that I was using: MAXqda. Either directly after the field day or soon thereafter, I digitalized my 'jottings'. These jottings I then processed into more comprehensible fieldnotes, thickening them up with all the recollections and associations which the jottings sparked while at the

same time drafting and adding memos that grasped those first analytical ideas and reflections elicited in the field and while handling the data. Over time, I reshaped these fieldnotes into more evocative 'scenes' and 'tales' to develop and present my data along with first tentative analytic ideas and reflections. In what follows, I present two outtakes of such field scenes: one is set on a field outing, the other in the studio.

> *In the field.* […] Right before the CEO gets here, Frank, Patrik and I go and hide behind a hill to observe his arrival unnoticed. Armed with insect repellent and squatting in a swale, we trail the approach of the car. Then we withdraw further to the edge of the forest where we can see from afar how the CEO in his suit, patent leather shoes and dark sunglasses walks up the hill while the wonderful scenery of the mountains and soft hills spreads around him like a carpet. I get the sense of being in a movie, as the childlike excitement of the artists transfers to me and envelops us with a scouty slash secret service atmosphere. While the CEO is supposed to reflect on a key question in the zero star hotel bed, we walk back to the restaurant where we will discuss the organization of rest of the afternoon with the collaboration partner. On the way back, we meet two girls and a boy on their way home from nursery school whom Patrik asks innocently where the zero star hotel is and whether they have seen it. The children point to the hill with the bed and tell us that it is all white, that you can even sleep there in pairs and that it has a 'stuffed' TV. Patrik laughs about their authentic innocence while I smirk about his impertinence. In the restaurant, I am the only woman at the table, and I notice it. I cannot quite point out why but there seems to be some kind of masculine energy or quality present as the group jokes doubtfully about the CEO without sunscreen and a bald head. Together they discuss the potential process with the CEO and the two brothers once more conjure up the importance of the open-endedness of the encounter. […]

> *In the studio.* […] I am amazed how much the energy fluctuates in the studio space going from calm, contemplative even apathetic to loud, hectic and vigorous and how quickly the atmosphere and mood is shifting. Frank is already here answering emails with loud keystrokes, gives me a quick hello and, as usual, instantly starts explaining what he is doing and what's on the schedule for today. I observe him for a while as he is answering his emails. Then I go to the bigger room of the studio and take a seat at the table, consciously taking in the space. I realize that I haven't done that for a while and get slightly unnerved by the idea that such a space can become something common. Instantly, the turquoise floor catches my eye. It is contrasted by two rows of velvety orange cinema seats placed on one side of the big room. As I gaze around, I notice how the rhythmic arrangement and density of the objects structure the studio space. Long tables, ceiling high side boards, piles of magazines and books, stacked images, wooden sculptures, print series, equipment, quotes, blackboards full of sketches and post-its try to compete for my attention as I sample the spaces and continuously stumble on new irritations. The room is full and yet

> not crowded. It is an organically growing archive, an unpredictable reference machine. As a symbolic and material excess and complex texture, it allows you to dive into a different universe and become enfolded by it. […]

Aside from the fieldnotes, I also relied on several technical instruments to record my immersion in the field. I used my iPhone to take pictures, audio and videos recordings (in particular when we were moving and taking fieldnotes was difficult), which allowed me to document in a more detailed manner the unfolding of dynamic field situations and dense or succinct sociomaterial settings and helped me reencounter and analyse fieldwork in a multi-sensory way. Interviews were also recorded with the help of my iPhone. For the field and individual interviews, I relied on audio recordings while I used audio and video recordings for the group discussions. The video recording in the group setting supported the allocation of speakers and allowed me to take note of affective intensities not only via the changes in voice, but also along body language and gestures. The interviews, video and audio recordings documented situations and conversations in Swiss German and English and were then transcribed by me in German and English. In the transcription process, I focused in particular on the content of what was said and also noted down the emotional tonality or affective intensity, gestures and body language or activities in the conversations when they felt particularly relevant and added significance and weight to what was being said. Transcribing Swiss German dialects presented a special challenge in the transcription process since these dialects do not follow the grammatical structures of written German and some of the more Eastern Swiss ones also differ significantly from the modalities of my own dialect. While I tried it to keep the German transcription as close as possible to the Swiss German mode and modality of expressing and did not attempt to artificially 'germanise' the interviews, this process still merited an important element of translation and at the same time interpretation of what was said in the interviews and conversations. When I used and translated certain quotes later for my analysis in English, I always relistened to the original to see whether my English translation and interpretation still felt fitting. At the same time, I also tried to forge my translation in a way that captured the 'affective voice' which I encountered in these transcripts (for more details on how I worked with affective voice in the writing of the monography, also see section 4.4).

4.2.2 Entanglements: research relations and ethics

A vital materialist perspective emphasizes that there is no way of knowing that is external to or independent of the world it tries to know. Rather, the researcher and her research phenomenon emerge through their shared entanglement, through their intra-relating (Barad, 1999, 2007; Gherardi, 2017a; Haraway, 1988). My entanglement with the AfS already started several years before I decided to draw upon their artistic enterprise as a case for this research project. I was introduced to them in the summer of 2013 through a university summer school. Intrigued and affectively moved by their work, I contacted them a couple of months later to discuss potential collaborations. Out of this initial contact, an informal and friendly relationship with changing configurations of mutual involvement evolved. I wrote parts of my Master's thesis in the studio space of the AfS, was involved in the conceptualization of a project for a client of the AfS (which was then not implemented), informally consulted the two artists on many of their projects and set up their Facebook page as I was writing my Master's thesis, while they in return also supported artistic projects of mine with their expertise and time and visited courses held by our research institute as guest speakers. When I decided to study the AfS more intensively in the scope of this research project, I was thus not quite a field novice anymore: I was already familiar with various of their projects, had observed and participated in their work informally and had even become one of their many accomplices and friends. This previous entanglement facilitated field access. When I approached the AfS with the idea of basing my research on their enterprise as a case in August 2016, they were instantly open and interested. Yet, they were also concerned with regards to whether they had enough relevant and ongoing projects for me to follow and research. This concern would stay with them during my fieldwork. The artists would inquire frequently whether I was getting 'enough' and 'pertinent' data and whether I had the impression that this was a valuable case for my research – a doubt which I diffused whenever I could.

As I was doing my fieldwork my becoming and being entangled with the work and processes of AfS was moving along different dynamics which influenced the research process. On the one hand, the field access which the AfS granted me was very open and uncomplicated. The two artists frequently liked to joke that I had the 'total field access'. Indeed, there were almost no barriers to what projects/meetings/activities I could follow and participate in. The AfS not only generously and literally

'incorporated' me into their work activities, but also openly shared their everyday thoughts, struggles and concerns, personal and professional, and provided me with archive material, documentations and field contacts. I even had my own key to their studio room. On the other hand, the research process also required active effort on my part to continuously stay entangled in the entrepreneurial processes and the constantly shifting configurations of their projects. As the plans and happenings around the projects were constantly moving, scheduling and organizing fieldwork along the 'eventness' of the field was tricky. And while the AfS frequently promised to keep me informed about the evolution of their projects and field events, I learned to not rely too much on this. Rather, I opted for regular check-ins via phone or in person to make sure that I was able to follow the most recent developments in the field. Field access was thus an ongoing process that required energy and attention.

When I was accompanying the AfS in the field, both artists playfully and pleasurably engaged with the idea of having a 'shadow'. They were visibly intrigued by having a researcher follow their work and organically integrated me into whatever situation they were navigating. The effortlessness in which the AfS entangled me in their everyday entrepreneurial processes thus quickly blurred the boundary between my positions as a researcher, an accomplice and as a friend. I not only encountered their entrepreneurial journey, but also participated in it. I translated texts into English, proofread newspaper and magazine articles, learned to take photographs for the AfS at the right angle, made suggestions with regards to the cutting of videos or the wording of social media posts. I voiced my opinion in meetings with collaborators or when the AfS reflected on their own entrepreneurial position, and gave my emotional support and sympathy when tensions or conflicts arose, thus becoming an integral element of this intra-active co-constitution of the research phenomenon. Despite my active role in the fieldwork, I frequently had the impression that in this co-constitution of the research phenomena and the field produced me, making my position as a researcher less a choice but rather an effect of the phenomenon itself. It continuously prompted me to make attempts at not only entangling but also at disentangling myself again (at least partially), particularly while analysing and writing. While this blurred boundary between my position as a researcher, as an accomplice and as a friend of the AfS paved the way for very intimate field encounters, it at times also made it difficult to be seen as an actor independent of the AfS. Notably in the interviews, I had to emphasize that I did not do research 'for' the AfS but rather 'with' or 'about' them. In the relationships

with collaborators, participants and volunteers who were involved in and generally on good terms with the AfS, this seemed less problematic. Or at least it did not keep them from voicing the dissonances, tensions, conflicts and ambivalences they experienced in their relationships with the entrepreneurial processes and projects of the AfS. People who were very critical of the AfS and their projects, however, seemed more reluctant to engage with my research, fearing, as I suspect, that they would be instrumentalized by the AfS along it. Such critical voices shine through in my data along the tales of the AfS and collaborators, the difficult project trajectories and in the publicly voiced discussions. However, my entanglement and position in the field made it sometimes difficult to engage with them more directly.

Through the AfS' habit of dynamically entangling various people in their work and dissolving boundaries between different roles, my position as a researcher usually quickly blurred into the background of the field situation. This meant that I often had to make a conscious effort to emphasize my role as researcher to people who were not aware of it yet. Furthermore, it instigated me to be mindful about the fact that people in the field might actually lose track that they and the unfolding situations were subject to data collection and research. Usually, collaborators and volunteers did not mind my presence and quickly started to engage with me on their own terms, treating me as an engaged and friendly counterpart rather than as a researcher. Meanwhile, I tried to situationally attune myself to the 'right' and ethical way of engaging in these research relations. Most of the time, this attunement was successful, as frictions only surfaced in very few instances where collaborators were wary about my presence and my 'taking note' of what was happening as a researcher. In a very conflict-laden strategy meeting around the *zero star hotel*, one of the collaborators was visibly tense about the fact that I audio recorded the event even though he did not openly object to it. And the mayor of the town which hosted the *BIGNIK* emphasized several times that certain statements of hers were off the record as I was making my fieldnotes. I tried to expand this sense of care and responsibility for the humans and nonhumans who became connected to my research to my own position and embodied presence in the field. This meant cultivating a sense of generosity towards the uncertainty, ambivalence, confusion, anxiety and resistance that frequently haunted my porous researcher body while I was trying to attune myself to the field and navigate these fragile (bodily) boundaries. I did this by reminding myself that failing to be properly attuned or present is an inevitable part of fieldwork and by allowing me to see every field encounter as a new opportunity

to be open and receptive towards what is happening. Eventually, I needed to trust that it is this ongoing pursuit of being present in the field rather than the various singular moments of (un/mis)presence that shape the overall quality of the research. At the same time it also invited me to celebrate the "intense pleasure, not to say joy and surprise", implicated in becoming such a 'multi-being' (Ulmer, 2017, p. 843; Vannini, 2015b) – and to become privy to the strange aliveness that flows through our bodies as we become more and other than ourselves through the process of research.

As I have made clear in the previous sections and by discussing my method assemblage, a vital materialist ontology and research methodology emphasizes that our epistemic practices are intricately entangled with ethical and political concerns (Barad, 2007; Bell & Willmott, 2019; Gherardi, 2019; Haraway, 1988; Law, 2008b). While co-enacting this 'situated' account of cultural entrepreneurship together with the many humans and nonhumans that connected to this method-assemblage, I tried to be as ethically responsible and caring as possible towards the vulnerability of those relationships and bodies which became engaged in this method assemblage. This is particularly relevant in the context of this research as the anonymization of the case, its events and the involved people were only partially possible due to their incredible material specificity. While the two artists and their main projects and project locations remain visible and named, I anonymized other events, organizations, locations and people. Whenever I felt that tracing a speaker might be possible despite anonymization, I asked for consent with regards to the published quotes. Although this account cannot quite escape the power relations created by the authoritativeness of my academic voice that carries the reader through this research account, to me this text is the result of a complex human-nonhuman co-authorship. The distributed agency of the people, materialities and processes in the field, of the data, and images, the conversations and ideas of fellow scholars, shaped this text as much or even more than my own research intentions did. It transformed and articulated me as a researcher as I tried to map and evoke the field and made this research a joint practice rather than an individual and directed process (Dowling, Lloyd, & Suchet-Pearson, 2017; Rose, 2016). By inviting and allowing for such a conglomerate of forces and bodies to shape this research endeavour and account, I hope this study not only performs a different politics of representing cultural entrepreneurship, but also contributes to a different politics of thinking, researching and enacting organization studies.

4.3 Dancing with data: analysing along crystallization, diffraction & glow

Affective ethnography as a method assemblage and a vital materialist style of crafting research not only problematizes and rearticulates how researchers trace and enact sociomaterial relations and affective intensities in the field to create data that move. It also wonders how researchers keep these data 'moving' in the process of analysis, and how the data keeps moving researchers. Many scholars emphasize that a vital materialist attempt at producing knowledge differently is challenging, risky, filled with self-doubt and trepidation (Ulmer, 2017; Vannini, 2015a). And indeed, that is how I frequently felt in the process of analysis as I staggered and floated through the mountains of data. Every now then, as I was rereading fieldnotes and transcripts or swiping through photographs on my phone, I would suddenly be seized by lucid and intrusive memories from the fieldwork whose significance I could not (yet) make out for myself. Or I was moved by an unintelligible feeling that kept bringing me back to certain encounters and told me that something was there. A 'something' that I was continuously struggling with to find the appropriate notions and concepts for as I was writing first conference papers or discussing my fieldwork and data with peers at the institute and at university. The process of analysis to me then often presented itself like a mysterious dance with data that I did not really know the steps for, but nevertheless somehow was able to follow through my embodied connection with this 'other'. While the data kept pulling me places, I tried to find better ways, more attuned ways to circle around and move with it, clinging to this trust "that something might come out, though one is not yet completely sure what" (Rajchman, 2000, p. 7). Ultimately, as Deleuze & Guattari (1994, p. 111) suggest "to think is to experiment, but experimentation is always that which is in the process of coming about". This dance with data thus entrained a form of embodied analytic experimentation that was guided by my researcher body's 'intuition' for the field (Tsoukas & Chia, 2002), a kind of gut feeling of this future knowledge which was trying to author itself (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019) as well as a general sense of 'wonder' that constantly accompanied and redirected this analytic dance (MacLure, 2013a).

During this experimental movement with data I used three analytic strategies suggested by affect scholars, vital materialist thinkers and more-than-representational

methodologies to help me navigate this dance. For one, I used 'crystallization' as way of writing affective vignettes that evoked those intangible movements and processes I was sensing and coming back to in the material (Gherardi, 2019). I also worked with a 'diffractive' reading of theory and concepts (Murris & Bozalek, 2019) that allowed different conceptual notions to resonate with each other and the data in order see how this interplay allowed me to bring into focus this knowledge that I felt was trying to articulate itself through my analysis. Eventually, I drew upon a form of coding that organized itself around my embodied attunement to data that 'glows' in order to identify and organize this intensity of data that kept moving me (MacLure, 2013a). While I engaged with the whole data corpus throughout my analysis and was continuously zooming into the interplay between sociomaterial relations and affective capacities, my analytic process started to carve out two different analyses with different emphases in response to my research questions. For my first analysis, I focused on how cultural entrepreneurship forges and moves the sociomaterial relations that constitute its entrepreneurial assemblage and how it navigates the agencies and resistances that surface in its entanglement with other human and nonhuman bodies. I traced this process and movement in the entrepreneurial case more generally and eventually articulated the analysis in particular around the data collected from the *zero star hotel* project. For the second analysis, I tuned more closely into the bodily connections and affective relations produced through cultural entrepreneurship by focusing on the processes and tactics through which the entrepreneurial project creates affective ecologies and navigates affective capacities. For this analysis, I looked in particular at the data which I gathered around the *BIGNIK* project. Ultimately, what I looked for in both analyses was what (different) kinds of politics are articulated through those cultural entrepreneurial processes. In table 3 below you will find an overview of the two analyses and the analytic and conceptual focus which I eventually carved out for them throughout the analytic process.

Table 3. Overview of the two analyses and the corresponding empirical chapters

	analysis I	analysis II
title	Cultural entrepreneurship through experimentation: (re)assembling sociomateriality	Cultural entrepreneuring as ecology of intensities: affecting bodies
focus	Sociomaterial relations	Affective relations
research questions	1) How does cultural entrepreneurship forge and navigate sociomaterial relations? 2) What kind of politics emerges from this sociomaterial process?	1) How does cultural entrepreneurship forge and navigate affective capacities? 2) What kind of politics emerges from these affective processes?
empirical scope	overall entrepreneurial process, *zero star hotel*	*BIGNIK*
conceptual operationalisation	Entrepreneurial processes as agentic sociomaterial assemblages	Entrepreneurial assemblages as affective ecologies of encounter
analytic questions	1) Through what processes do agentic entrepreneurial assemblages move and sustain? 2) Through what dynamics does this process of (re)assembling sociomaterial relations navigate agency and constraint? 3) How does this process of reassembling sociomaterial relations articulate a political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship?	1) How does the entrepreneurial assemblage articulate a different affective ecology of encounter? 2) Through what tactics does the entrepreneurial process move affective capacities towards this affective ecology of encounter? 3) How does this affective ecology of encounter articulate a political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship?
findings	1) The entrepreneurial assemblage moves and sustains by articulating an 'experimental system' that organizes itself around intangible 'epistemic things' and articulates different 'regional ontologies'. 2) The microdynamics of entrepreneurial experimentation, by playing with sociomaterial boundaries, navigating bodily connections and moving in speculative processes allow the entrepreneurial assemblage to navigate agency and constraint. 3) Cultural entrepreneurship unfolds an 'onto-political' capacity along its process of entrepreneurial experimentation by re-mattering reality and reconfiguring the systems of 'self-others-things' that organize our everyday lives (see also section 7.2.1).	1) The entrepreneurial assemblage articulates a different ecology of intensities by enacting 'ecological couplings' around agentic materiality, rhythmic time and rhizomatic collectivity. 2) The entrepreneurial process draws upon the interplay of 'opening', 'articulating', 'attuning' and 'opposing' as affective tactics to move the affective capacities of bodies towards enacting and sustaining this ecology of intensities. 3) Cultural entrepreneurship unfolds an 'ethico-political' capacity by articulating this ecology of intensities as an 'affective commons' that produces different collectively shared and fostered affective relations (see also section 7.2.1).

The crystallization of different field events into affective vignettes was a central tool and often also the starting point in my analytic dance with data (Ellingson, 2009; Gherardi, 2019; Militz & Schurr, 2016). The process of writing these vignettes was guided by the embodied and affective understanding that had accumulated and inscribed itself into my body throughout my fieldwork and the critical incidences or specific relational processes which this affective understanding pointed me towards and shone a light on. I tried to crystallize these incidences and relational processes into affective vignettes that staged specific situations. To do so, I crafted textured and dense accounts by connecting my kinaesthetic experiences and bodily resonances with the unfolding of the different sociomaterial relations in the field. Hence, fleeting pieces of dialogue, temporal flows of actions and relations, prominent objects and settings as well spatial atmospheres through their association with my body were interwoven into a rhythmic sequence of text. The pictures which I made during my fieldwork were particularly helpful in re-evoking this intricate multiplicity of perceptions and sensations and inspired me as I layered them into visceral textual scenes. While I would not call these affective vignettes 'ficto-critical' (Michels & Steyaert, 2017; Stewart, 2007), they were 'semi-fictional' in the sense that they were carefully staged and stylized assemblages that tried to carve out and evoke particular intra-actions in the field rather than representing 'the truth' of what had happened in a certain situation (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011; Humphreys & Watson, 2009). They oriented me towards "creatively assembling affective traces and dwelling in the affective qualities of encounters, rather than attempting to name and fix them" (Bell & Vachhani, 2020, p. 686; see also: B. Anderson & Ash, 2015). From writing and rewriting these affective vignettes I then developed first tentative analytical notions by framing these sociomaterial relations and agencies and bodily movements in the data in a more conceptually driven manner. For instance, when I was crystallizing different field events around the *zero star hotel* project into vignettes, I started to take note of the 'speculative' nature of the entrepreneurial process around this project, and the pronounced embodied attunement and affective engagement that seemed to shape it and hold it together. Or when I was crystallizing what seemed to me like important or special field encounters around the *BIGNIK* project, I started to get an idea that there was a shift or movement happening in the relational entanglement between different bodies and materialities; a shift which created a sense of surprise and pleasure, but

also at times confusion or frustration and seemed important in shaping the intensity of the overall project and process.

While my conceptual focus on sociomaterial and affective relations was notable early on in the research process, it was important to me to not create too much conceptual closure too quickly. I wanted to leave enough room in my conceptual and analytical thinking for the data and this 'something' that is unintelligible and unrecognizable within existing categories or practices to "kick back" (Barad, 1999, p. 2; St. Pierre, 2018). It would invite my analytical thinking to accommodate 'variations in living' which I had not foreseen in the research process and which could challenge and destabilize my own understanding not only of the field, but also of those very concepts (St. Pierre, 2018). Over the process of my analytic dance I thus experimented with a range of conceptual notions within and adjacent to the broader field of vital materialist thinking. Along this experimental analytic process, I connected different conceptual lenses and notions with each other and to my vignettes and field data in order to see how they moved the data. I thus observed which kind of processes and relations they made visible (or obscure) and which kind of openings and tensions they created within the data as well as in the storyline of the research. In order to better understand how agency and constraint are navigated through sociomaterial relations and movements in my case, I first experimented with spatial theory and tried to connect it to the conceptual notion of experimentation as well as the preliminary data which I had collected. The sensibilities around entrepreneurial experimentation which emerged this way proved to be meaningful for carving out the processual dynamics in the data of my case. However, in the review process of the paper we submitted around this analysis and in discussions with my colleagues, I realized that the link to spatial theory was too complex and maybe obscuring rather than supporting what was happening in the data. Eventually, Barad's notion of entanglement turned out to be the right fit to articulate a more in-depth analysis of the sociomaterial reconfigurations in the process of entrepreneurial experimentation. In my analysis of the data from the *BIGNIK*, I first worked with the notion of 'affective practices' in an attempt at moving with the data (Reckwitz, 2017a). While the notion of affective practices was resonant with my field experience, it proved to be of little help in getting a more complex understanding of the intra-actions that enacted those intensive incidents. I then experimented with Rancière's (2007) notion of 'redistribution of the sensible' and linked him to the sensibilities of an affective ANT (Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020). This brought me closer

to those affective shifts and politics that seemed particularly relevant in the data, yet I needed more conceptual reiterations before I found the right fit for the analysis. Rather than grounding my data in conceptual notions or theory, I 'plugged' those conceptual notions into the data to allow for a 'diffractive' reading of both theory and the data, in order to "turn the data into something different, and […] push theory to its limit" (A. Y. Jackson & Mazzei, 2013, p. 264). Diffraction as an optical metaphor frames a pattern of difference created when a multitude of waves encounter each other. It was introduced by Haraway (2004) and Barad (2007) as a methodological approach that allows for a disruptive and non-hierarchical way of engaging with theory and requires "attempting to let loose a certain kind of wild conceptuality" (Thrift, 2008, p. 19) that creates new intensities and practices. It invites scholars to read texts and data through one another to come to different insights (Murris & Bozalek, 2019) which are slowly carved out and settled into different analytical questions and storylines during the process of analysing.

Often after I developed a first diffractive reading of my affective vignettes, I would go deeper into my body of data to see how those notions resonated with the broader data corpus and were able to intensify the relationships that seemed to be vibrating in the material. Rather than engaging in 'mechanistic coding', I organized my coding and testing of notions around a receptivity towards data that glows, thus data whose affective quality points to "something abstract or intangible that exceeds propositional meaning, but also has a decidedly embodied aspect" (MacLure, 2013b, p. 661). Data which glows can be an fieldnote fragment, an image, a voice – that starts to glimmer and gathers our attention precisely because it resists straightforward analysis and refuses to disclose its meaning, opening up potentiality by producing a certain 'eventness'. Or as MacLure " (2013b, p. 661) puts it, "glow as a kind of surface effect of something that is befalling us". In the process of becoming immersed in and entangled 'with the minutiae' of the data (MacLure, 2013a), I forged a constantly proliferating set of labels, patterns, annotations and memos on different levels of the analysis that created order and disorder at the same time (a visualization of this coding cloud can be found in the appendix). For the first analysis, the coding for instances organized itself around labels such as 'potentiality', 'fragility', 'continuity', 'seriality', 'playfulness', 'tacit knowledge', 'speculation' or '(manic) passion'. In the data analysis around the BIGNIK project, I developed codes around 'infection', 'care', 'humour', 'tension', '(change of) capacity', 'negotiating boundaries', 'new imaginaries', 'rhythm', 'wonder', 'intensification' or

'geo-historicity'. This dwelling and mingling with the data also meant giving myself over to the data, playing along its game of resistance and accommodation in my process of analytic thinking. It meant letting the data 'choose me' (A. Y. Jackson, 2013), while pleasurably struggling for concepts that try to vibrate with the ineffable that was already present, thickening the tale that emerged over time into continuously reworked extensive texts and tables.

Eventually, both analyses where also crucially shaped by the broader researcher ecology in which this research project was embedded. The idea to theorize my case around the processes and politics of experimentation was propelled by a call for papers for a Special Issue on the politics of organizational entrepreneurship in the journal 'Entrepreneurship and Regional Development' in November 2016. Around this call and along my diffractive reading of Rheinberger's (2001) notion of experimentation with my material on the case, I developed a tentative model of (cultural) entrepreneurial experimentation. This model continuously refined itself and moved more towards a vital materialist ontology throughout the discussions I had with my supervisor as we co-wrote the paper, through the feedback of the editors and reviewers and peers at the institute as we looked at and discussed the data and vignettes together during the publishing process as well as through the feedback I got from the participants of the conference stream on experimentation at EGOS 2017, where I presented a first draft of the paper. Rheinberger allowed me to understand the sociomaterial relations and movements in cultural entrepreneurship as the effect of a process of experimentation that revolves around vague notions of a future to come and at the same time sensitized me to the difficulty of holding such an 'experimental system' and entrepreneurial assemblage together. This then challenged me to investigate through what 'microdynamics' this process is kept productive. In the interplay between the conceptual notions of Rheinberger and others vital materialist thinkers and the data from the *zero star hotel* I then carved out the processual, sociomaterial and embodied dimensions that keep this process going and enable it to articulate new sociomaterial orders. In January 2019, we finally published this model in a conceptually driven paper in Entrepreneurship and Regional Development (Lüthy & Steyaert, 2019). For the analytic chapter in my monography, I then unfolded and dug deeper into the data that drove the conceptualization of this model and articulated it into a thick analysis of sociomaterial reconfigurations.

Likewise, my second analysis was shaped by this ecological embedding. As several researchers at our institute work with practice approaches, this was the first conceptual angle which I chose in order to grasp the affective processes in my data. Combining this practice approach with Rancière, I started to investigate through which affective practices the entrepreneurial process articulates a 'redistribution of the sensible' in the *BIGNIK* process. In the analytic process, I forged four affective practices as first empirical categories: 'shifting perception', 'materializing new imaginaries', 'caring and taking interest' and 'asserting boundaries'. Through several conversations with my supervisors and peers and the feedback I got from presenting my analysis in the critical entrepreneurship conference stream at CMS 2019, I realized that although the general direction of the analysis seemed right, the conceptual hinge between affect, practices and Rancière was too complex. Moreover, it became clear that while my analysis was already hinting towards the 'tactics' that created this shift in affective capacities, the overall affective capacities created along this process were missing. I thus dropped both Rancière and the practice approach in my analysis and instead allowed a Deleuzo-Spinozian reading of affect to take over in my movement with and reading of the data. With this I then I reworked and thickened my four affective practices into 'opening', 'articulating', 'attuning' and 'opposing' as affective tactics. Furthermore, I generated a second set of affective vignettes in which I investigated how the sociomaterial assemblage of the *BIGNIK* enacts shifts in the embodied experience and affective intensities of everyday life. In several rounds of analytic writing and peer feedback, I organized these vignettes around 'agentic materiality', 'rhythmic temporality' as well as 'rhizomatic collectivity' and eventually framed these empirical categories through the posthumanist notion of an 'ecology of intensities' (J. Bennett, 2010; Chagani, 2014; Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015). This allowed me to carve out how different bodily couplings and affective tactics forge the *BIGNIK* as an 'affective commons' (Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019).

Generally speaking, vital materialist methodologies reject the authoritativeness of a classic understanding of research validity in favor of partial and situated epistemologies that "move toward material ways of thinking and being" (Ulmer, 2017, p. 836). My analytical process was thus geared towards eliciting a specific tale about cultural entrepreneurship (and certain cultural entrepreneurial projects) rather than articulating a kind of universal knowledge. Yet, I would argue that the analytic dance I performed by following and thickening this resonance between data and concepts

along experimental thinking, iterative writing and the interactive presenting and discussing of the different analytic outputs and stages with others also articulates a form of inter-body validity of the insights that I will present and 'presence' in the next two chapters. It was encouraging, motivating and at the same time also unburdening to see that the notions, conceptual understanding and answers that slowly emerged throughout this analytical dance resonated with (and occasionally were challenged by) different bodies (peers, interview partners, participants, friends, collaborators, academic papers, newspaper articles, images, video fragments) who were less immersed in the process of analysis. At the same time, the analytic entanglements created along those affective crystallizations, glowing data and diffractive reading of concepts also started to form a sensuous and vibrating topography that reverberated across the two analyses and the distinctive sets of field materials with which they worked. Hence, categories and notions which I developed for one of the analyses started popping up and applying also to the moving data of the other analysis and vice versa. This ongoing process of resonance and friction between the various elements that were intra-acting in this method assemblage led to a continuous testing and at the same time also strengthening of the analytic insights which slowly developed for the case as a whole. Meanwhile, this deepening and reverberating of the results along an entangled network of inter-body relations also underpinned my own intuitive feeling of their pertinence and capaciousness as onto-epistemological beings that do not carve out 'the truth', but a certain relevant knowledge about how we can understand and articulate the processes and politics of cultural entrepreneurship.

4.4 Presencing research: evoking and voicing / mapping and tracing

Affective ethnography as a style of crafting research also articulates the challenge of how a research text can perform vital materiality and affective intensities in the process of (re)presenting research. Eventually it is in the 'agencement' of the research text that the method-assemblage really comes together (Gherardi, 2019). Many vital materialist scholars problematize the capacity of social science research to represent affective intensities as well as vibrant reality in more general. They call for 'non-representational' research practices that animate, rather than document life – practices which "enable the happening of the social world" (Lury & Wakeford, 2012, p. 17;

Latham & McCormack, 2009; Thrift, 2008; Vannini, 2015b). Yet, as Ulmer and others points out, it may not be possible to avoid representation altogether: "Perhaps, then, representation is something that might be troubled in degrees," calling for 'less-representational' or 'more-than-representational' practices and experiments in the enactment of research (results) (Ulmer, 2017, p. 839; Lorimer, 2005). Moving towards such a more-than-representational style of presenting is not an easy undertaking. The Cartesian habitus of representation, it seems, is deeply engrained in contemporary practices of social science research and our own researcher bodies. I use 'presencing' rather than presenting here as a term because it emphasises that writing vital material research is more about creating knowledge by giving presence to certain aspects of reality as they are produced and enacted in the research assemblage, rather than neutrally and objectively presenting or representing them. Furthermore, the notion of presencing also carries an important embodied quality, as 'presence' is felt rather than (merely) known. In that sense, I hope that the presencing of my research findings in the following chapters makes the reader feel and sense and as much as understand the knowledge that this research is articulating. In the trajectory of this research project, I often struggled with the task of wanting to enact the vitality and imaginative capacities of the research relations in which I was enveloped along a more-than-representational research tale while at the same time trying to 'pacify' this brimming and proliferating aliveness into a performative research narrative. At the end of the day, I aimed at disrupting the traditional mode of presenting research and at the same time navigating the boundary between representational and more-than-representational modes of writing and discussing research through a set of different stylistic choices in the materialization of this text. These stylistic choices allow me to "enliven rather than report, to render rather than represent, to resonate rather than validate, to rupture and re-imagine rather than to faithfully describe, to generate possibilities of encounter rather than construct representative ideal types" in the process of presencing my research, even though I would argue that at times they also report, they also validate, they also describe and represent (Vannini, 2015b, p. 15).

For one, while writing this research account, I tried to work intuitively and artistically with the materiality of language. Although language is often carefully contained and calibrated in research reports in order to create validity and consistency, it does not have to operate that way. Deleuze emphasizes that there is something wild in language – calling it sense. "Sense 'happens' to bodies and… insists in propositions', allowing

them to resonate and relate, while never being reducible to either side of that old duality that separates the material world from the words that putatively represent it" (MacLure, 2013b, pp. 658–659; see also: Deleuze, 2004, p. 142). The materiality of language, the way it issues from the body, is obstructed by the body and affects other bodies, makes writing and reading texts affect-laden processes that dialogue with the body of the author as well as the reader, creating sensations, resonances and frictions (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019; MacLure, 2013b). Following and immersing myself in this materiality of language and letting it work through me in the process of writing (differently) (Gilmore, Harding, Helin, & Pullen, 2019; Grey & Sinclair, 2006), I adopted a style of writing which 'tracks' and evokes rather than explains the sociomaterial relations and affective intensities organizing cultural entrepreneurship (Bell & Vachhani, 2020). Creating a textual surface that is sensuous and resonant, rhythmic and relational, it allows other readers to become 'pulled in' by what is happening. As a style of writing, it invites readers to attune themselves to and apprehend the vital material and affective relations at play, because "[s]trictly speaking a more-than-representational text is to be felt and not discussed" (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019, p. 308).

While I worked with materiality of language as a general approach to writing my research and creating it as a textual surface, I drew upon it in particularly pronounced way through the staging of small everyday events and different voices in the process of presencing my results. I constructed these small everyday scenes as semi-fictional events by using my body as a 'point of contact' (Stewart, 2007) and as a moving camera angle that tracks with meticulous attention the poiesis, rhythm and intensity of objects, spaces, people and conversations and their oblique intermingling in the fleeting hum of everyday encounters. Also, I ongoingly staged 'voices' throughout the writing and presencing of my research text. These voices, rather than being read as representations of what people said in interviews or in the field, are themselves affective encounters and movements that emanate from those conversations (Gherardi, Murgia, Bellè, Miele & Carreri, 2019). In the fieldwork, I noticed how I was continuously 'moved' by what was being said to me and how these enunciations as voices with an intensity, with a texture and timbre were a central element in fostering the circulation of those intensities in the assemblage of cultural entrepreneurship. While translating the data from interviews and field conversations from Swiss German into German and eventually into English, I condensed those quotes into the embodied voices that I

encountered in those conversations or as I was relistening to the interviews: voices with an agential force and transformative capacity that affected me as I was doing my analysis and that might affect the readers as they become entangled with the voices in the process of reading.

Second, I looked for stylistic means which allowed me to navigate the tension and connection between representational 'tracing' and productive 'mapping' as two distinctive modes of practicing research (Martin & Kamberelis, 2013). Martin & Kamberelis (2013), building on Deleuze & Guattari (2013), frame tracing as the mode through we usually create and present findings as social science researchers. Traces are copies and reproductions (or representations) of some alleged deeper structure of reality which is assumed to be essential, stable and universal. In contrast to tracings that continuously come back to the same, mappings chart open systems "that are contingent, unpredictable, and productive" (Martin & Kamberelis, 2013, p. 670). Maps are connectable and accessible in various dimensions. They allow for different points of entry and are susceptible to constant modification. A map can be torn and tossed away, adapted, reworked and recovered. Mapping then is a performative and transformative mode of practicing research (findings). It produces new articulations of phenomena and discloses "potential organizations of reality rather than reproducing some prior organization of it" (Martin & Kamberelis, 2013, p. 671), sketching not only dominant forces and structures, but also pointing towards the forces which are marginalized and elided and the openings and disruptions that reside in them. Yet, as Deleuze & Guattari (2013) would argue, social science research is not about giving up tracings, but about finding ways to put tracings back onto the map.

The challenge that a more-than-representational research account articulated for my own mode of presencing was thus how I could connect 'tracing' and 'mapping' within the materialization of the text and relocate or stretch the tracings that my research produced towards a map. One important tactic which I used to move beyond the dominant mode of tracing was to draw upon images in the articulation of the research text. Steyaert, Marti & Michels (2012) argue that images as devices have an eminent capacity to perform the multiplicity and reflexivity of organizing and organizational research. They point to three aesthetic strategies how images allow for the surfacing of this multiplicity and reflexivity in research accounts by 'de/centralizing', 'de/synchronizing' and 'dis/covering' research, disassembling the coherence and the

linearity of traces by creating fluid and fragmented material connections that invite an engaged and creative reading of the results. De/centralizing points to the way that images or cascades of images allow to decentralize the research account by bringing other localities and materialities into the research assemblage and by pointing towards the complex socio-spatial production of organizational processes. De/synchronizing emphasises the way that images allow to desynchronize the linearity of the research tale by evoking the seriality of moments and the criss-crossing of histories that shape organizational processes. Dis/covering then highlights how all images are partial and performative by reflecting aesthetically on the contingencies of what is made in/visible in research representations. Implicitly, all three strategies are at work in the way I used and drew upon visual material in the presencing of my research text by combining and bringing into tension two different sources of visual materials: the visual material created within the scope of the work of the AfS as well as images made by myself during my fieldwork (Peltonen, 2014).

Over the years, the AfS has documented its art productions extensively through videos and photographs, the visual material often blurring the boundary between being documentation and performative instrument in the assemblage of artworks themselves. In the research text, I drew upon those images to presence another material layer in the analysis and argument that I am making. It allows readers to experience the visceral and affective capacities assembled in those images and connect them to the entrepreneurial processes at stake, opening up to a 'thinking with images' in the research text as an aesthetic mode of sense-making (Latham & McCormack, 2009). These 'official' images within the chapters are contrasted by my own photographs which I made during my fieldwork before the different chapters. While the official images are coloured, titled and clearly situated in the research tale, my own images are kept in black and white. They are untitled and envelop the whole page as though they are trying to push and expand the research tale that unfolds between the margins of the text. As associative visual affordances, they are not directly linked to analysis in the text but rather reiterate the phenomena that are discussed in the chapters from different angles, making other moments, sites and perspectives to those stories visible – "producing multiple versions of the real, showing how each version impinges on and shapes the phenomenon being studied" without needing to exemplify them (Denzin, 1997, p. 13). Together with the short vignettes, quotes, clips and links, they interrupt and decentre the reader from the linearity of the written text (Calás &

Smircich, 1999; Gherardi, 2017a), exposing audiences "to the ongoing, heterogeneous and often contested nature of lived experience" and organizing (Cunliffe, 2003, p. 987). Together they articulate a multimodal and imaginative rhizomatic topography that sprawls away from its core text into different (virtual) niches, little side-stories and events, rearticulating the core text as a vibrating fragment of the broader map of this research, while at the same time presencing ethnography as a 'synaesthetic', hence multi-sensory experience (Pink, 2015).

I paired and mirrored this visual-material tactic with a more narrative-textual one by unfolding and discussing my findings not only as 'tracings' but also as potential 'mappings'. While one can read the model of entrepreneurial experimentation which I develop in my findings of chapter 5 as a trace and underlying structure of how cultural entrepreneurship is organized, I try to discuss it also as a map, as a potential processual trajectory towards which cultural and other forms of entrepreneurship can move and as a transformative mode of entanglement through which they can unfold other political forces. By the same token, one can read the affective tactics which I develop in chapter 6 to frame the bodily processes around cultural entrepreneurship as a tracing of the eminent affective relations that unfold in these processes. However, I would rather frame them as tentative mappings which sketch the collective bodily capacities that such (cultural) entrepreneurial processes organize and the potential and at times also ambivalent ethical openings which they create in the affective organization of our everyday lives. Ultimately, reading cultural entrepreneurial projects as ecologies of intensities articulates not only a tracing but at the same time also a mapping of a different interplay of bodies, pointing us towards the new and different ways in which we can couple ourselves to materiality, time and collectivity and affectively move together in organizational processes of everyday life.

4.5 Vital materialist research assemblages

In this chapter, I have argued that a vital materialist approach to studying entrepreneurship requires post-qualitative method assemblages which are attuned to the messiness, uncertainty, embodiment and nonhuman entanglement of (social scientific) research. In the different sections, I showed how I crafted the research design, the research relations, the data collection, analytic and writing process in resonance with a vital material onto-epistemology by choosing a style of interacting

with and shaping this method assemblage that gives space to a multiplicity of human and nonhuman agencies and affective intensities (of texts, data, images, spaces, objects, people, conversations, images, encounters, bodily presences) to emerge and make themselves felt in the research process, hence co-authoring its results. I also emphasized that method assemblages always perform different goods. I hope that along this chapter I was able to convince the reader that the following two chapters, which presence the findings of this research assemblage, perform a carefully negotiated, situated truth of contemporary organizational processes by carving out how intricate sociomaterial relations (chapter 5) and affective capacities (chapter 6) play a part in articulating and shaping cultural entrepreneurship. However, the way I attend to this truth-making in the two chapters also aims at unfolding and pointing to a different aesthetic capacity of cultural entrepreneurial processes. I do this by inviting the reader to sense and feel, be moved and become enchanted by rather than just merely understand these sociomaterial and affective processes. Ultimately, as I have already argued, research is never innocent, always animating and enhancing certain tendencies and capacities of life at the cost of others. Hence, my ambition is also that the sensual knowledge unfolded in these two chapters invigorates us to (re)imagine how cultural entrepreneurship can become an ally in re-mattering our relationships to others, in articulating more inclusive ecologies of encounter and in co-creating a sense of possibility and hope in times where none of this can be taken for granted.







‘At the point of the emergence of the new, the new is not the new. It becomes a novelty only by a transformation that makes it a trace of something to which it has given rise.’

Hans-Jörg Rheinberger

Q4



5 Cultural entrepreneurship through experimentation: (re)assembling sociomateriality

As I have discussed in the conceptual chapter, a vital materialist perspective emphasizes that all organizational and entrepreneurial processes are embedded in, navigate and (re)assemble intricate and dynamic sociomaterial worlds, whereby social and material processes are inextricably entangled in various 'matters of doings' (Orlikowski, 2010). In such a vital material onto-epistemology, materialities are not understood as independent objects with fixed boundaries and capacities which pre-exist their interactions (Gherardi, 2017b). Rather, the social and the material are co-constituted in networks of activity which perform particular phenomena and assign to them certain meanings, thus shaping our everyday experience and embodied understanding of reality (Orlikowski, 2010). Moreover, agency in entrepreneurial processes is not located in human bodies and intentionality but distributed in the intra-active entanglement between humans and nonhumans and in the affective capacities that emanate from those relationships (Barad, 2007; Gherardi, 2017b). For this first analytical chapter, I will focus on the sociomaterial relations in cultural entrepreneurship by answering the following research question: How does cultural entrepreneurship forge and navigate sociomaterial relations and what kind of politics emerges from this sociomaterial process? I thus inquire how cultural entrepreneurship is able to shape the sociomaterial configuration of art worlds and everyday life by articulating its entrepreneurial process around an agentic assemblage.

To answer these research questions, I will focus both on the broader entrepreneurial trajectory of the AfS (section 5.1 and 5.3) as well as zoom into the *zero star hotel* (section 5.2). Along its ten-year evolution, this project is particularly well suited for tracing the assembling and reassembling of sociomaterial relations in the entrepreneurial process of the art enterprise. In section 5.1, I will first analyse through what process this cultural entrepreneurial assemblage moves and sustains. Drawing in particular upon the work of science historian Hans-Jörg Rheinberger (2001) and broadening his notions through a vital materialist reading, I will conceptualize this process as one of 'experimentation' by carving out how the sociomaterial assemblage created in the

entrepreneurial process of the AfS constitutes a dynamic and yet fragile 'experimental system' that organizes itself around vague 'epistemic things' and articulates different 'regional ontologies'. In section 5.2, I will then investigate through what dynamics this experimental process of (re)assembling sociomaterial relations generates agency as it tries to forge new regional ontologies. My analysis carves out the 'microdynamics' of this process of experimentation by showing how playing with sociomaterial boundaries, navigating bodily connections and moving in a speculative process allows the experimental system to sustain and stay productive. Finally, in section 5.3, I will explore how this process of reassembling sociomaterial relations articulates a political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship. I unfold this political capacity by drawing upon Barad's (2003, 2007) notion of human-nonhuman entanglement. In my analysis, I suggest that the cultural entrepreneurial process of experimentation re-matters reality by creating moving human-nonhuman entanglements that elicit, assemble and reassemble different sociomaterial worlds and capacities. I interpret this re-mattering of reality as reconfiguration of different systems of 'self-others-things' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962; see also: Knorr-Cetina, 1992) that organize our embodied experience of the world.

5.1 Reading entrepreneurial assemblages as experimental systems

Experimentation as a notion circulates in various social and cultural domains. It surfaces, for instance, in the realm of art (Bippus, 2013; Chanan, 1972; Noe, 2000), in the field of social movements and urban governance (Marres, 2012; Williams, 2016) as well as in the field of management and organization studies (Bucher & Langley, 2016; Kerr, Nanda, & Rhodes-Kropf, 2014). In those domains, it carries and vibrates around different connotations as a method to explore new possibilities, to intervene in and improve on society and to explore the unknown. The fact that entrepreneurial endeavours have an experimental quality has been stated numerously in and outside of research contexts. After all, the association of entrepreneurship and experimentation is not a new one. Already Schumpeter argued that entrepreneurship is "essentially experimentation with 'new combinations' of existing resources" (Manso, 2016, p. 4). In more recent research on entrepreneurship, experimentation frequently surfaces in contexts of financial risk (Kerr, Nanda, and Rhodes-Kropf 2014; Manso 2016), innovation (Lindholm-Dahlstrand, Andersson & Carlsson 2016; Sabato, Vanhercke &

Verschraegen 2017) and (educational) policy (Iscaro, Castaldi & Sepe 2017; Mitra 2017). Also notions such as 'bricolage' and 'effectuation' (Fisher, 2012) or interventionist ideas like 'enactive entrepreneurship' (Johannisson & Olaison 2007; Johannisson 2009) often invoke experimentation as an important feature of entrepreneurial exploration and solution finding while also pointing to the important sociomaterial dimension of this process of entrepreneurial experimentation. Nevertheless, entrepreneurial experimentation remains surprisingly under-conceptualized and is often evoked through rather pale common-sense notions. There is thus a need for and at the same time potential in developing experimentation as a conceptual notion to unfold the intensity and complexity of the sociomaterial processes in cultural entrepreneurship.

To address this gap, I will develop a vital materialist model of entrepreneurial experimentation which conceptualizes how the cultural entrepreneurial process of the AfS forges and navigates sociomaterial relationships. To do so, I turn to the realm of science and technology studies (STS). Here, the term is not only most firmly rooted, but has also experienced its most profound conceptualization in the works of Rheinberger (2012). Rheinberger is a science historian who published his main works in the wake of the increasing understanding of scientific work as 'science in action' (Latour 1999; 2002). He is recently being rediscovered and reintroduced particularly in art theory (Schwab, 2013; Stemmler, 2014) as well as, although more tentatively, in affect theory (Blackman, 2014, 2015) and posthumanism (Barad, 2007; Lenoir, 2002). Rheinberger developed his conceptualizations of experimentation based on his engagement with the discoveries in molecular biology and by drawing on Heidegger, Derrida and art historian Kubler's reflection on the creation of novelty in art (Stallschus, 2013). His work's sensibility for the embodiedness and embeddedness of experimentation, the agency of materiality as well as its performative capacity in generating and disrupting reality make it particularly interesting to a vital materialist conceptualization of experimentation in cultural entrepreneurship. In the following section, I will engage Rheinberger's notions of 'experimental systems', 'epistemic things' and 'regional ontologies', by pairing and diffracting his work through the lens of other STS scholars and vital materialist thinkers such as Barad, Knorr-Cetina, Law, Latour or Blackmann to show how we can understand the entrepreneurial assemblage of the AfS as the productive sustaining of an experimental system. In table 4, I summarize the key conceptual notions of Rheinberger through which we understand moving cultural entrepreneurial assemblages as experimental processes. In the following sections, I

will refine and elaborate on these key notions along the entrepreneurial process of the AfS.

Table 4. Experimentation: overview of the key conceptual notions

experimental system	epistemic things	regional ontologies
– sociomaterial assemblage concocted and moved by experimentation – dynamic, fragile, driven 'from behind' – articulates new micro-potentialities	– things that are trying to be brought into existence through experimentation – obscure and 'underdetermined' – pose resistance to dominant orders	– local realities fabricated and articulated in experimentation – generative and disruptive – need to be stabilized and translated

5.1.1 Experimental systems

Rheinberger (2012) conceptualizes the experimentation process by referring to the notion of experimental systems in an attempt to do justice to the complex sociomaterial processes and temporalities involved in experimentation. While the term 'system' might evoke the idea of a rigid, closed-off apparatus, Rheinberger's notion comes closer to what we would refer to as an assemblage (Deleuze & Guattari 2013; Müller & Schurr 2016). It is an evolving configuration that connects the different components of experimentation into a system or network that is constantly being transformed, tinkered with, and, as Rheinberger (2018) emphasizes, is often brittle and fragile, working most productively on the threshold of collapsing (Rheinberger, 2012). An experimental system in science encompasses all the different and heterogeneous aspects of the scientific research process over time: instruments, preparations, methods, concepts, skills, research objects, institutional communities and also the spaces in which these moments are brought to interact with each other in productive and creative arrangements (Rheinberger, 2011). Rheinberger's notion of experimental systems thus takes the locus of experimentation away from an isolated or predefined set of actions and describes it as a thick, loosely coherent sociomaterial web that moves and is concocted in the process of experimentation. Rheinberger highlights that it is the situatedness of experimentation that propels experimental systems forward. They are – as he puts it with reference to Thomas Kuhn (1970; see also Kindi, 2010) – 'driven from behind', i.e. by what has happened before: by the trajectories of the heterogeneous elements that are folded together in experimentation, by what is already there and the opportunities that continuously open up through their connection (Rheinberger,

2018). Instead of capturing truth or validating existing theory, experimental systems continuously produce a field of new micro-potentialities (Rheinberger, 1994b).

Looking through Rheinberger's lens at the entrepreneurial assemblage of the AfS, we can conceptualize it as a dynamic experimental system. In the entrepreneurial process, the AfS constantly concocts, tinkers with and upholds this experimental system, which encompasses the various and shifting elements that are connected to the entrepreneurial becoming of the AfS. The experimental system of the AfS encompasses the two artists, their bodily capacities and trajectories: their history of cabin building and studying art as well as their interest in performance and rupturing everyday life. It also includes the different (potential) partners, collaborators and participants that become intertwined in their entrepreneurial projects: the public institutions, CEOs, building cooperatives and communication agencies; the farmers, volunteers or journalists and the tendencies and histories that allow them to connect to the AfS' entrepreneurial assemblage. Of course, it also comprises the various materialities, practices and concepts which the AfS employs and works with: the twin-body and the butler gloves; the vintage beds and the red and white fabrics; the mountain sceneries and public spaces; the surprise ambushes and unusual communities; the (moving) images and installations or the discourses and narratives which it draws upon and subverts: the discourse of artistic freedom and unconventionality or the narrative of corporate innovation and regional identity. The notion of an experimental system also reverberates in the AfS' own self-conception. The two artists frequently refer to their own enterprise and its different sociomaterial relations as the 'system studio for special tasks' and in the thesis for his art studies Frank captioned the AfS as an experiment.

Experimental systems, according to Rheinberger, are 'driven from behind', by seizing the movements and unexpected opportunities that emerge by working with what is 'at hand' (Baker & Nelson, 2005). Already the foundation of the AfS in 1999 is the effect of apprehending and responding to such surging capacities. In his thesis in 2003, Frank retells how on one of his explorative walks he discovers several discarded signs in an abandoned factory:

> I found it exciting to read the lettering on the signs: woodworm room, instrumental chemistry, amongst others I read 'special tasks', which instantly struck me. I tried to imagine what kind of work could be connected to this term and had the most odd thoughts […]. I decided to take the sign home and put it on my work table.

In jest, his brother glues it to the door of their studio, which triggers a visitor to ask whether they are the studio for special tasks. The brothers reply hesitantly – but also delighted – that by all means one could see it like that and draw the word 'atelier' in front of the sign on their door after this encounter. A journalist picks up on the name and makes it central to his article about the two artists. Frank writes in his thesis:

> At this time, we didn't have a concrete idea of the potential meaning of the term 'special tasks' in relation to our own work, much less of a studio for special tasks that carries this name. In the back of our minds, we maybe had an intuitive notion. That's why in the interview, we exaggerated a little bit in relation to this alleged 'studio for special tasks'. In hindsight, it feels as though in the inebriety of the conversation we gave in to the fantasy that this fairy tale of the studio for special tasks could actually become a reality.

In the aftermath of the conversation, doubts surface and the AfS tries to stop the journalist from using the term 'studio for special tasks' as they feel it is too early to communicate this to the public. They are also concerned about a potential 'business' image that it might convey. However, it is too late to change the article and, as a result, the studio for special tasks is officially initiated. The sign from a former industrial building, by connecting to the atelier door, an acquaintance, a journalist within the dynamic experimental system around the two artists articulates the 'micro-potential' of an artistic enterprise.

Rheinberger emphasizes that such experimental systems are delicate arrangements rather than robust and smoothly working apparati. The fragility and brittleness inherent to experimental systems is also present in the entrepreneurial assemblage of the AfS. Many supporters point out that it is difficult to operate at the intersection between art and business. The AfS needs collaborators and partners in order to create and finance its artworks at the interstice between art, business, society and everyday life. Often, however, these collaborations fail because potential partners get scared or disagree with the way that the AfS tries to protect the artistic integrity of those collaborations and materializes its artistic concepts, as Frank puts it, 'in such a sharpened way'. The big media attention which the art projects of the AfS often create is what attracts many companies and institutions to collaborate with them. Yet, this media interest is only generated if and because the work produced in the collaboration is perceived as art and creates intriguing impacts and irritations. In a conversation, one of the artists reflects on the fragility that is inherent to many of their collaborations: "They want to boil us down, make our ideas suitable for everyday use, practicable. Art is not viable,

though. It is wilful." While the AfS navigates these collaborations, it thus needs to be careful to not be pushed too much into the economic corner and continuously runs the risk of becoming just another agency: "[Y]ou just get dragged into the machinery and Patrik and I, we are so happy that we cannot be captured. Well, we continuously have to pay attention to that." A member of the communication agency points out:

> [W]ell, many people buy them [the AfS] for two reasons, it is the attention that I get if I cruise along with them and the other thing is, they inspire me, but what the AfS really wants is a long-term collaboration that tries to transform something.

At times, the artists are annoyed by the struggle of constantly trying to work against the brittleness of the relationships that sustain their entrepreneurial assemblage. Meanwhile, they are also aware that this is what makes their artistic trajectory worthwhile: "Our art has a purpose. It gets things moving, […] as soon as it works effortlessly, it already bores us."

5.1.2 Epistemic things

While entrepreneurial systems are not organized towards some kind of telos, a predefined goal that merely unfolds through experimentation, Rheinberger (2011) emphasizes that experimental systems are used to explore and revolve around what he calls 'epistemic things'. Epistemic things, according to Rheinberger, are obscure entities that have not quite gained sharp contours but that are explored and try to be brought into existence through experimentation, driving its ongoing production of difference (Blackman, 2014). As polysemic and "notoriously underdetermined" traces, they contain a surplus of meanings and point to repressions, displacements and excesses that linger in the relational dynamics of experimental systems (Rheinberger, 2011, p. 312; Blackman, 2014). In the process of experimentation, epistemic things are carriers of "remnants of older narratives as well as fragments of narratives that have not yet been told" (Rheinberger, 1994a, p. 77). Their opacity is what arouses interest and keeps them alive as explorative targets. DNA, viruses or climate change, for instance, are epistemic things. They are fabricated in complex scientific and institutional practices that produce them as obscure things or constellations with a potential to renegotiate our relationships to others (to heredity and health, to shopping and handwashing, to flying and food). Epistemic things thus have a subversive quality (Bloor, 2005). In their resistance and resilience, they create friction vis-à-vis the dominant orders against

which they try to articulate themselves (Rheinberger, 1994b, 2011). Eventually, the chasing of epistemic things in experimental catenations continuously produces 'sense-generating shifts', a kind of movement that is oriented and reoriented by questioning and generating its own boundary conditions (Rheinberger, 1997, 2008).

In the context of cultural entrepreneurship, epistemic things point to this intangible notion and intuitive sensing of a future entrepreneurial configuration that tries to be brought into existence through the experimental system. They articulate themselves as a faint sense that (cultural) "life might somehow be organized differently" (Farias, Fernandez, Hjorth, & Holt, 2019, p. 559). In the past two decades, the experimental system of the AfS has been propelled by and explored this feeling that art can and needs to intervene more directly in people's everyday lives as the two brothers have become increasingly dissatisfied with producing works for exclusive audiences and the 'white cubes' of museum halls. Frank notes: "We are doing an exhibition again for once and we just noticed how little dynamics, how little feedback, how few people, how little explosiveness, how little reference it creates." The epistemic thing thus surface as a vague idea or an 'anomaly' that is held on to and wants to be addressed (Spinosa, Flores, & Dreyfus, 1997). Patrik notes:

> I have never felt incredibly attracted to the object on the wall. I was always fascinated by the background or what happened next to the object, or the process that it created when you looked at such an image. The image is nice and all, but what really intrigued me were the histories that lay behind it. The stuff around it or behind the image is always more interesting than what you see in the foreground.

This interest of the AfS in the processes and effects of art rather than art itself has moved the experimental system of the AfS and its projects investigating the idea that art can have a function without being exploited – that it not only has an artistic, but also an entrepreneurial value and surfaces as a trace in the resonance that their work is able to create in non-art spaces. Patrik explains: "[T]o bring art to places where you do not anticipate it, that is our interest. Beyond the confinements of the ordinary art world, art is negotiated differently."

On the one hand, this vague epistemic thing which the artists have sensed for themselves and their enterprise holds together this continuously forming and transforming experimental system. On the other hand, the notorious obscurity and underdetermination of this epistemic thing also allows for the ongoing movement and

'dynamism' of this experimental system (Blackman, 2014). One of the collaborators of the AfS notes:

> [I] found it quite interesting coming from this communications and strategic background where you always want to know 'what is actually the story, the idea behind it'. I mean, ask them once about the zero star hotel, they [the AfS] cannot tell you. They can tell you for one context or for another [but not in general]. They are – not in a negative way – they are quite agile. And where they need to be, they can be agile.

One of the artists explains:

> The process is at the centre and the process dictates the next step. You need to be quick on your feet, and when you notice that you are able to spark something and something is happening, then you cannot be stubborn in your head and say, I cannot consider this because the concept is like that. I mean, the concept is strict, but the concept has big margins within which we can play. […] To test what is possible, to respond with fast reaction when something is coming back, to build that in and expand, […] that is where experimentation happens.

Although the experimentation process of the AfS at times succeeds in articulating and stabilizing some aspects of the epistemic thing, others never fully do and at the same time new ones emerge. When the AfS installs the *zero star hotel* in the bunker, it experiences and at the same articulates the unexpected power that art can have when it operates outside of the museum for the first time. Yet, it takes another ten years to find out how this concept can be transformed into a more sustainable business model. One of their collaborators notes: "It was all fame, and we were in all the newspapers, everywhere around the world, […] and I was so frustrated that we could not convert this fame into something more concrete, turn it into a solid business."

As the epistemic thing in the entrepreneurial experimental system of the AfS revolves around articulating art in a space without artistic coordinates, without curators and classic art audiences, it also incites a process of meaning and boundary making with regards to the AfS' own artistic identity. The AfS flirts with the idea that their work is not considered art, punning the slogan: 'The best art is not perceived as such'. Yet, it also spends a considerable amount of time negotiating and debating the moving boundary conditions of their own artistic practice in this entrepreneurial process so that their work stays in line with the artists' own sense of artistic integrity as it evolves along the budding field of opportunities outside of the traditional art field. The twin artists frequently turn down or end collaborations when they feel that they are too

commercially driven and threaten to water down their artistic identity. One brother reflects:

> Whether what we do is art is a question to many people because it operates at this interstice. For me personally, it is maybe not so relevant anymore. I mean, we both have studied art, that is our biography, but maybe art is the wrong word, maybe it works through another notion like artonomy or eventually something entirely different. […] It is a different processing of artistic practices and artistic thinking outside of the regular operations of art: not in the gallery, not in the museum but in the system of everyday life and in the system of other companies and this intermingling that happens, that is very interesting.

Eventually, this new artistic and entrepreneurial position as an epistemic thing also poses resistance, as it tries to articulate itself against the gravity of the dominant order in the art world. The two artists note: "Of course, we have many, many people that don't know what to do with us. To a certain extent they also drive us […]. It is kind of cool if you have an antagonist."

5.1.3 Regional ontologies

Rheinberger emphasizes that in their capacity to continuously transform, focus on and manipulate certain relational dynamics of reality, experimental systems point beyond that reality. After all, "reality does not precede the mundane practices in which we interact with it, but is rather shaped within these practices" (Mol, 1999, p. 75). By drawing upon different, interconnected everyday orders – material, social, cultural – as a malleable resource and active agent in the exploration of this not yet clearly articulated epistemic thing (Knorr-Cetina, 1992), experimental systems 'fabricate' potential realities (Barad, 1999, 2003; Knorr-Cetina, 2002; Latour & Woolgar, 1986, 1986; Rheinberger, 1994b, 2001, 2011). At the same time, they also articulate their ontological structures, by both making materials and giving them significance, manifesting (new) objects and subjects, connections and boundaries (Barad, 2007; Dale & Latham, 2015; Knorr-Cetina, 1992; Law, 1994). The experimental systems, for instance, that try to trace climate change or the corona virus simultaneously also enact different subjects (that travel by train or socially distance) and objects (such as energy performance certificates or luxury face masks) imbricated with meaning. Hence, Rheinberger quoting the French biologist François Jacob frequently calls experimental systems 'machines for making the future' [translated by Rheinberger (2011)]. They are 'productive' (Heidelberger,

1998), creating what Rheinberger (2011) in his writings refers to as 'regional ontologies' that articulate new 'possible worlds' (Dey & Mason, 2018). At the same time, they are also disruptive, producing frictions in the dominant modes of ordering (Law, 2008b). The regional ontologies resulting from such experimental processes are a "local, perhaps temporary, and often fragile accomplishment" (Bloomfield, Latham, & Vurdubakis, 2010, p. 428; see also: Dale & Latham, 2015). They need to be defended, stabilized, spread and translated with considerable effort and skill in order to sustain and spread beyond the confinements of the experimental systems from which they emerge (Latour, 1999b; Latour & Woolgar, 1986).

Likewise, the process of cultural entrepreneurial experimentation also produces such regional ontologies. When the two artists discuss their work and entrepreneurial configuration, they emphasize that creating 'new realities' is what they strive for not only through their own enterprise but also in the projects it pursues, as they try to fabricate a different position and future of art. On the way to a potential client they reflect that this is part of what makes their work interesting for themselves and for those that participate in it: to be part of and at the same time create a new reality, a reality 'that expands and at the same time undercuts' what is already there. As the experimental system of the AfS tries to forge this potential reality, it creates a distinctive regional ontology that enacts artists as challenging collaborators and potential business partners. Patrik notes:

> I think that is a little bit our achievement, that we don't just call ourselves concept artists but also entrepreneurs, and that irritates many people. […] As soon as people work with us, they start to understand in what direction it goes. It is not about going simply where the money is, but where there is interesting content to work on.

It also articulates CEOs and professionals into unorthodox mavericks and explorers. The hospitality professional that collaborates with the AfS on the zero star hotel notes: "I had to look outside the traditional hotel world to launch this concept as at the time, unusual accommodations were not so popular. This is where I always thought [the AfS gives] me the freedom to work outside of the boundaries of the hotel industry." Or it articulates landscapes into imaginary rooms. At a strategy meeting, a member of the communication agency talks about his own experience of spending a night in the outdoor version of the zero star hotel:

> I found it an incredible experience, when you get up there it is kind of clear, but as soon as you lie in bed, everything is blending. It was incredible how that moved me. […] It is so disruptive, a cut. It is really vexing. You think it is a joke. […] You get a little bit nervous, then it is there. It is unreal.

Patrik notes drily: "[T]he zero star hotel is like an image, but three dimensional, a 'tableau vivant'. It chisels at reality."

This fabrication of regional ontologies in the process of cultural entrepreneurial experimentation is generative and disruptive at the same time. It generates new practices, entities and subject positions while also disrupting contemporary understandings how for instance artists or accommodations are supposed to operate. Certain journalists and politicians are convinced from the start by the wrong-headed and unorthodox way in which the AfS implements ideas and approaches business topics and are unfazed by the interruptions it creates. A hospitality professional at a hotel which collaborated with the spin-off of the zero star hotel recounts how the staff was unnerved by the concept and the way it unravelled well-established work routines at first, but embraced the project over time: "There were employees who were like 'people are mad to sleep outdoors for 300 CHF. […] I mean, that is not possible with all those insects and the arachnophobia…' and now they really want to sleep there themselves." However, it is not always that this disruption comes to be appreciated. In the collaboration with a building cooperative as well as after the implementation of the first outdoor edition of the *zero star hotel*, partners try to shut down the project after an initial phase of enthusiasm, underestimating the capacities and forces that are unleashed by this new reality: the noise and agitation suddenly created by local and public interest. Frank reflects on these unfavourable project developments, pointing out that "[t]his intensity that we created, this momentum, this liveliness, […] that was overwhelming for people". The regional ontologies created through their work often instigate a dynamism that is not controllable and that overpowers and interferes with the established patterns of organizing the world. At times, this leads to conflicts as people are not expecting those implicit boundaries to become transgressed.

Upholding these regional ontologies and local realities thus requires sustained efforts both on the level of the art enterprise as well as with regards to its project. The two artists are aware of this and emphasize that "new processes and new realities do not establish themselves over night. It takes perseverance and commitment". At times, the experimental system of the AfS succeeds in articulating these regional ontologies in a

more persistent manner. For the CEO who collaborates with the AfS in the performance *Saving Flies in Deppendorf*, the performance is only the starting point for a continuous entrepreneurial transformation that moves his business model towards providing ecological services and lobbying for insect biodiversity and wins him several business prices. Likewise, the regional ontologies around the *BIGNIK* project and the *zero star hotel* seem to become more robust after being continuously (re)fabricated through the experimental system of the AfS over a time frame of almost ten years. Yet, many of the AfS' projects also fail to institutionalize themselves and eventually are not able to sustain themselves beyond the initial collaborative effort of the art enterprise. A politician who hired the AfS to explore and transform the meeting room culture of an entire regional administration points to the ephemeral nature of those regional ontologies created by the AfS:

> They turned everything upside down […]. Really queer stuff, like dark instead of bright rooms and the department of education held their meetings on the roof. The project was great, full of relish. It created irritations, maybe also a sensitivity that we need to pay more attention to this, but eventually it was not sustainable.

Similarly, the collective relations that uphold the *Social Urban Zone* eventually fade out despite intense public struggle and engagement around the project. Or works such as the *Rhein river bank passage* remain one time performances rather than becoming transformative art interventions. The artist reflects: "Our vision was always that it would be ritualized. You would need to do it once a week, once a month. […] When the unusual action becomes a custom, then you have created a transformation."

5.2 The microdynamics of entrepreneurial experimentation

Creating and upholding such dynamic and at the same time fragile entrepreneurial experimental systems and the regional ontologies which they fabricate takes, as I would argue, considerable skill and effort in negotiating the ongoingly emerging agencies and constraints. In this section, I want to examine through what dynamics the entrepreneurial process of experimentation navigates these agencies and constraints, keeping the experimental system both productive and disruptive. For my analysis, I zoom into the *zero star hotel* project, which is well suited for such an exploration, as the

project itself also constitutes a dynamic moving experimental system. Over the past ten years, it has worked towards articulating the micro-potentiality of a new model of accommodation. It has fabricated different regional ontologies around contemporary understandings of hospitality, being concocted around various resources 'at hand': an empty nuclear bunker and vintage bedside lamps from shut down hotels, local volunteers, tourism destinations, the notion of the butler, the star classification discourse, a hospitality professional and later a brand. In my analysis, I will follow the trajectory of the project, starting with its initial conceptualization in the bunker version in Sevelen 2008, the outdoor editions in 2016 and 2017 and, finally, the articulation of its spin-off, zero real estate in 2018.

My analysis unfolds how playing with sociomaterial boundaries, navigating bodily connections and moving in speculative processes allow the entrepreneurial assemblage to navigate agency and constraint. Together they constitute the 'microdynamics' of this process of entrepreneurial experimentation. I articulate them into a model of entrepreneurial experimentation (see figure 2) by exploring in more depth three dimensions which already linger in the previous Rheinbergerian reading of entrepreneurial experimentation and which play a crucial role in making experimental systems both generative and disruptive: sociomateriality (section 5.2.1), embodiment (section 5.2.2) and processuality (5.2.3). While I spell out these three dimensions of experimentation separately, I want to emphasize that the capacity of cultural entrepreneuring to articulate and sustain new regional ontologies through experimentation is only possible through the artful interplay of all three. An overview of the three dimensions and their core attributes can be found in table 5.



Q5

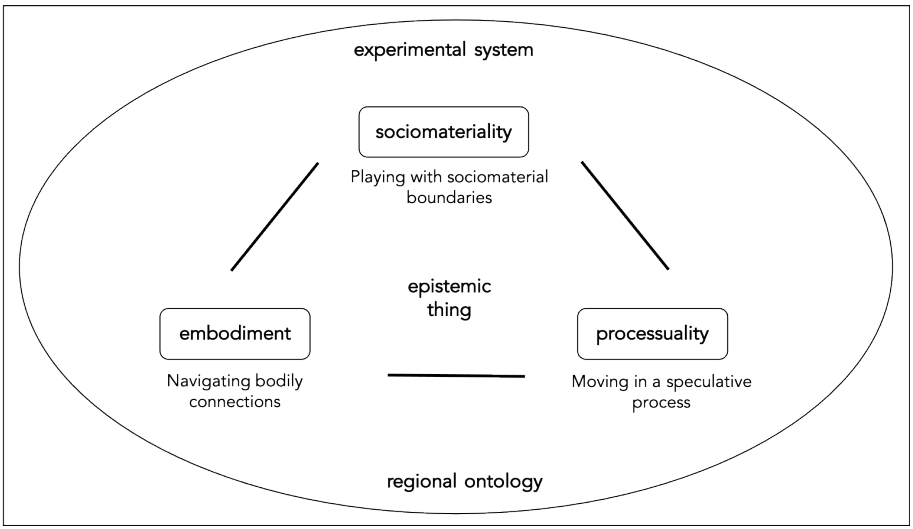


Figure 2. Model highlighting the microdynamics of entrepreneurial experimentation

Table 5. Sociomateriality, embodiment and processuality in entrepreneurial experimentation

Sociomateriality *Playing with sociomaterial boundaries*	– intervening into existing sociomaterial orders to create agency and explore potentialities – working with hybrid assemblages that subtly play with and breach boundaries to invite the unexpected
Embodiment *Navigating bodily connections*	– strong affective engagement keeps the process going despite challenges and invites others to participate – shaping the experimentation along an intricate embodied attunement to the experimental reality
Processuality *Moving in a speculative process*	– ongoing and recurrent, creating something which is never entirely stabilized – speculative and open, looking for answers without clearly defined questions

5.2.1 Playing with sociomaterial boundaries

One of the key hallmarks of experimentation is its eagerness to understand and engage with the world in its sociomaterial capacity (Hagner & Rheinberger, 1998; Knorr-Cetina, 1992; Latour & Woolgar, 1986), which is also key to unfolding how experimentation is able to enact new regional ontologies. Two attributes seem to be particularly crucial when thinking about the sociomateriality of experimentation. First, experimentation

intervenes in existing sociomaterial orders to explore potentialities and create agency. The zero star hotel, which the AfS creates by transforming a bunker (see image 12) into a hotel room intervenes in the sociomaterial order of both art and hospitality. As an artwork, it deliberately disrupts the dominant sociomaterial order which assumes that art is a cultural artefact usually without a purpose beyond its aesthetic capacity. At the same time, the project also intervenes in the dominant sociomaterial order of the Western hospitality industry, questioning the star classification system, which revolves around a notion of luxury grounded in material comfort rather than for instance the quality of the lived experience of guests. The AfS notes:

> It was an attempt to intervene into the star classified hospitality industry and use the vacant position of the zero to invent a new category as a countermovement with the goal to redefine and critically question the dominant notion of luxury,

and points out that "the zero star hotel would be a tame project if we had implemented it as artwork in the art industry". Happening outside the classical realm of art, the project articulates and unfolds different unexpected potentials. It creates a 'vibration', as the AfS puts it, that surprises the artists themselves: It accumulates a flood of media and guest inquiries from all over the world, attracts partners and international investors and is even shortlisted for an international hospitality award. The sociomaterial intervention is also met with resistance: The hospitality business association urges the artists to withdraw the non-star-classified hotel 'as soon as possible' and the art enterprise eventually has to close the bunker version due to noise complaints and the lack of both a fitting investor as well as a sustainable license agreement to use the bunker for the art project. Therefore, by intervening in reality, entrepreneurial experimentation plays with and responds to different configurations of the natural and social order (Knorr-Cetina, 1992).

Along this process, experimentation uses the constraints and restrictions of the sociomaterial world as a productive resource to explore its potentialities. The frugal bunker walls, for instance, which are a central element of the initial conceptualization of the *zero star hotel* pose considerable resistance when the AfS tries to institutionalize the project in several cities. The nuclear bunker clashes with contemporary legal frameworks regulating the hospitality industry with regards to emergency exits and makes finding a suitable long-term solution difficult. When the AfS comes up with the outdoor version (see image 13), they use the notion of 'real estate free' to frame this

new version of the *zero star hotel* 'without roof and walls', transfiguring the previous resistance of the walls into a new potentiality, realizing "[w]hen it is so difficult to implement in the nuclear bunker, why don't we just blast it away". Frank notes: "Patrik and I are guys who always find a solution, like purely artistically speaking, when we put on our specs, it is actually the problem that is the resource for finding the solution." The process of experimentation, its manner of intervening into sociomaterial reality is thus driven by the desire to gain agency and expand feasibility within a certain reality rather than creating an accurate representation of some kind of external world (Meinel, 1993). The AfS notes in several instances:

> It is this kind freshness that often [makes] us strong, to not mull over something, but to test it, implement it, create results and take it from there. […] Our credo is to do feasibility at once. That gives energy and power.

Reflecting on the *zero star hotel*, they point out: "You need to do it, so that the [potential] reality gets a chance."



Image 12. 'Null Stern Hotel', 2008: bunker version
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben

> *Sociomateriality.* The smell of chickens and fresh cow dung tingles our nose. The farmer who owns the land around the bed and is the head butler of the zero star hotel welcomes us barefoot when we arrive on the hill. We enter a little container, hidden behind another bump in the hilly Appenzell landscape. In it, several neatly pressed white shirts and a black bow tie, the official modern butler uniform, are placed on hangers. The wall is covered with checklists which map out detailed protocols of how the butler service of the zero star hotel is supposed to run. The list for preparing the room reads as follows: 'Are the sheets clean and tight? Is the seam hidden? Are pillows placed symmetrically and parallel to the wooden rim of the bed? Are the hand towels placed correctly (diagonally) and the slippers placed onto them?' Patrik fetches a pair of gloves and some linens and observes once more the cloudy sky. At the bed, Frank is rubbing furniture polish into the wood and enjoys the sophisticated smell. His brother sweeps the floor. With well-orchestrated movements, the linens and white pillows are neatly positioned by the artists' hands while they discuss how they want to compose them for the images which they are going to shoot later with one of their corporate collaborators: 'Maybe the pillows need to move a little more to the middle.'

Second, for experimentation to thrive and to be able to enact different realities, it needs to work with hybrid assemblages that subtly play with and breach boundaries. The entrepreneurial experimentation around the *zero star hotel* is able to articulate a new regional ontology through careful bricolage: mixing things that usually do not belong together (Rheinberger, 1994b). In the vignette above, we get a sense of these heterogeneous associations that constitute such a hybrid assemblage. The pungent smell of cow dung clashes with the clean and careful arrangements of the bed, the bare feet of the butler contrast with the black bow tie in the container, the scenic room clashes with the uncertainty of the weather. Through its hybrid sociomaterial configuration, the *zero star hotel* subtly shifts and transgresses boundaries of what accommodation could mean – combining comfort with elements of uncertainty, mixing the polished with the unruly, associating the zero with a special kind of service. One of the collaborators recalls her first impression when she saw 'the room without roof and walls':

> I remember this moment, there on the field, with this scenery. To me it was like this strange contrast, the warm bed in the middle of nature with those high mountain peaks. […] I think that is the work of the Riklins, to elicit that, to create the possibility that we are able to perceive something in our everyday lives that we wouldn't otherwise.

This hybridity is not only inscribed into the installation itself, but also in the experimental system around and beyond the installation. For instance, when the AfS

accompanies the 'opening' of the art installation with an official press release to the national press agency or when they protect the art installation by registering it as a global brand. For the AfS, this process of shifting boundaries materializes itself not only on a physical, but also on a mental level. One of the artists notes:

> We talk often in the form of fantasies. A lot happens on the level of thoughts, and some of it eventually manifests in a physical form. […] It all starts with a fantasy because […] as soon you are able to think it, the fantasy becomes a part of reality. Zero star is also a fantasy whereby we take norms and put them together anew in a playful way. It is a fantasy where you take the bunker and the Biedermeier bed, the butler and the brand and bring that together.

There is a certain tension running through the organization of this hybrid assemblage. On the one hand, and despite the AfS' appreciation for going quickly into action, there is an extreme rigor inscribed into the way the hybrid assemblage is configured and focuses on specific aspects of reality. In the fieldnotes, we see the careful manner in which the AfS scripts the appearance of the butler and the bed and the image that they create. The farmer recounts how he had to do an apprenticeship with the two artists to become a butler and says, laughingly: "I thought I knew how to make a bed, but I had to show it to them several times." A long-term collaborator of the project reflects:

> When the two brothers discussed for what felt like twenty minutes how you have to place the linens, and that every corner needs to be exactly the way it needs to be […]. Initially when I didn't know them that well yet, I found that quite absurd, because I thought it doesn't really matter all that much whether it is three centimetres to the right or four centimetres to the left. […] They have this incredible precision in certain elements, and to me that is also a bit emblematic for all that is behind [the project]. It is not just arranged by accident, everything is very deliberate, they put a lot of thought into it and what looks like a coincidence isn't one at all.

This rigor and precision in organizing the various elements of the hybrid assemblage is central to unlocking its potentiality. One of the artists reflects: "[…] There is a lot of work behind how everything is implemented and in our mind that is really decisive in how [the work] is able to reach others." On the other hand, the hybrid assemblage also needs to be open and accessible enough to allow for the association of other bodies and materialities and the arising of unanticipated events within the experimental system (Rheinberger, 1994b). One of the artists reflects: "In certain moments, we are very strict, when it is about the aesthetics and the image, and in another moment, we are less strict or even very open, when it is about the social process […]." For the images, for instance,

the farmer agrees to wear his rubber boots, but then carries on working his butler shifts barefoot. One of the artists notes: "This figure of the modern butler is playful. It is not about the rigid way of English serving; it is about an individual moment where you slip into this role without giving up yourself […]." He adds: "You cannot win people over for a process via dictation. […] You need to create a certain softness, otherwise the social process isn't working." By subtly playing with and breaching existing boundaries inscribed into the sociomaterial orders that the *zero star hotel* intervenes in, the process of entrepreneurial experimentation generates a form of excess and new possibilities (Rheinberger, 1994a): Art installations become disruptive business models, bunkers transform into hotel rooms, farmers and communities become hoteliers. The hybrid and tinkered quality of the experimental systems eventually gives them, as Hacking (1983) put it, a 'life of their own', creating an "epistemic generator of surprises" (Rheinberger, 2012, p. 7). The hospitality professional who has been part of the *zero star hotel* project for over ten years notes how he very quickly felt that the project started to have an independent existence:

> We are just here to feed the beast, that is what I used to say. It is like having a little lion or crocodile at home, all you can do is feed it, if you stop, it goes crazy. The zero star project is like this. We do the best we can to control it, but it has a mind of its own.



Image 13. 'Null Stern Hotel', 2017: outdoor version
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben

5.2.2 Navigating bodily connections

Another crucial dimension in navigating and organizing entrepreneurial experimentation are bodily connections. The first attribute of the embodied dimension of experimentation which I want to highlight is that experimentation is shaped not only along cognitive concepts and ideas, but also along an intricate embodied attunement to the experimental reality. As different STS scholars (Knorr-Cetina, 1992; Polanyi, 1983; Rheinberger, 2012) have underlined, experimentation is guided by a form of tacit knowledge that conveys to experimenters a remote idea of what might come. Hence, practices such as interpretation, observation and imagination that continuously organize the process of entrepreneurial experimentation do not only draw upon the entrepreneurs' mental but also on their bodily resources – in particular their intimate relationship with and embodied attunement to their sociomaterial assemblage. From liberating the *zero star hotel* from its bunker walls to finding the right spot and angle to place the outdoor version, to the writing of press releases, such activities are navigated based on the entrepreneurs' intricate rapport with the project, which they have built

through different experiences over the years. When the AfS walks across the hill where the outdoor version will eventually take place, the artists immediately 'feel' that this location and iteration of the project has the capacity to articulate a new potential. One of the artists tells me that finding the right location was 'like magic', it made them feel dizzy. He points out that

> [t]he idea to go into nature with the bed, that wasn't an intellectual decision, but an intuitive one. Back to nature is actually a huge topic, but we only became aware of it when we had already put the bed into the landscape. […] [At the time] we couldn't yet put it into words, but we just knew, this is interesting. […] Very often we think in images, and as soon as the image appears in our mind's eye, the image emerges intuitively and actually shows us the way.

The way the AfS works with and appropriates language when developing and communicating the *zero star hotel* is also guided by this intuitive understanding of those notions' capacities in relation to the other bodies in the assemblage. One of the artists reflects: "When we say 'real estate free' or 'the landscape is the wallpaper', that is a wonderful message for a journalist. We know that by now. You have to tell them that and then it is part of the headline." A collaborator notes: "[The AfS] has this grasp, they instantly notice, those are expressions that work, that create attention, that stir questions."

When I am in the field with the AfS, I notice that they continuously strobe, sample and check into the sociomaterial relations that constitute and unfold around the project. At the installation, they carefully observe how the weather and outdoor situation has treated the wooden bedframe and the mattress, they inspect the tiled floor and the mechanism of the cover that protects the bed in case of rain. They check in with the farmer who is the head butler to get a sense for his situation and embroil the people that we pass on the way in brief conversations to figure out how they experience the project, how it resonates with them, sometimes even incognito, acting like they barely know it. When the AfS calls the hospitality professional and partner to discuss important strategic questions, one of the artists frames the conversation for me: "We need to feel each other. We haven't spoken for eight weeks." Rheinberger uses the Lacanian expression 'extimacy' to frame this intricate connection and experience along which experimenters shape experimental trajectories (Koethen, 2012; Rheinberger, 1994b, 2012). It is a form of 'subsidiary awareness' that is produced and driven by the embodied trace of reflective action, enabling "our thinking [to] blend into the things

and the things into our thinking (….)" (Borgdorff, 2013, p. 115). It helps experimenters to intuitively grasp the potentialities of their experimental assemblage, to notice and be surprised by their often almost imperceptible surfacing (Hagner & Rheinberger, 1993) and to continuously reshape this entrepreneurial configuration as new potentialities and frictions surface. One of the artists evokes this sense of extimacy by noting:

> If you are stubborn, you only hear what you want to hear, or the opposite, you hear exactly what you don't want to hear. It is actually all about how you take it up. Something boring can also be interesting, or somebody who mentions something [that you disagree with might become relevant]: It is a question of your ear, how do you perceive something, how are you hearing it and how are you reacting. What is your next action?

Or the hospitality professional frames it as follows: "We need to be listening to the project, to where it is taking us and help it get there more than anything else."

> *Embodiment.* I stand next to the two brothers at the installation. The season of the bed has ended a few days early due to bad weather and the outdoor version of the zero star hotel is about to be dismantled. Frank pulls out the electric screw driver which we fetched at a carpenter's workshop nearby and starts taking the bed frame apart. Patrik takes in the sight and gets nostalgic. 'Isn't it great how this rock formation shows here?' While they dismantle the bed, they continue to be captivated by the materials and take a trip down memory lane. Then they start to discuss the current business situation of the installation. 'We cannot look at it economically, that is our dilemma. The motivation is not there.' Frank muses: 'It is also a beautiful thing. We need to endure that, this uncertainty. Our love for the work is stronger than the urge to realize an economical value.' The next day in the studio space, they tell me that they were so excited by all the zero star material in the storage space that they decided they needed to keep working with it. Patrik is busy looking through photos of the guest entries: 'It is so genuine'. His thoughts drift back to the idea of social sleep, which they recently developed around a potential collaborator. 'I still like the idea, there is a fire burning.'

Second, these bodily connections in entrepreneurial experimentation are also driven by a strong affective engagement that keeps the experimental system going in spite of challenges and invites others to participate. In the vignette, we get a sense of the affective relationship that the AfS cultivates with different aspects of the experimental system and its trajectory: the unexpected beauty of the installation and its different material elements, the various memories that are connected to them or the genuine response which the installation elicited in guests. It sparks an engagement in the artists, a desire to keep on working with and around the different elements that constitute the experimental system of the zero star hotel. One of the artists notes that

it is helpful that they can be content with something even if it does not work out: "There are people who are constantly disappointed. Even though they [achieve] a lot, they are still unhappy because they have such high expectations, but we are almost too realist, we are already delighted by the little steps." The affective relationship between the two brothers, the 'twin dynamic' as some collaborators call it, helps them mutually rekindle this desire. The affective engagement which keeps the AfS invested in the process of experimentation is also what draws other bodies in to participate. One of the collaborators of the AfS notes: "At the core, there is somehow an idea that fascinates, and they [the AfS] could go anywhere, to exaggerate it a bit, anywhere and create this fascination […] because they have this igniting element." And indeed, when I trace and follow the project, I sense how this affective relationship which the AfS nurses with the experimental assemblage transfers itself to other bodies that become invested in it. A volunteer turned butler tells me at the closing event of the outdoor version: "The passion of the brothers spilled over, I shared the vision and became part of it. I had this feeling that I wanted to embody this. You are in a role and yet authentic, it was brilliant." In the case of the *zero star hotel*, the agential capacity of the image, its 'associative force', as one of the artists calls it, is often the driver of this ignition and affective engagement whereby the AfS involves and embroils people with their ideas and concepts: "With the image you don't really have to explain much, it creates a moment where people can undergo a process from irritation, to wonder and excitement." Another collaborator notes that the precision and rigor that goes into to constructing a hybrid experimental assemblage and the images that translate it is also part of what creates this "emotional sharpening that fascinates people and draws them in".

While this affective ignition created by the sociomateriality of the experimental assemblage and the AfS' relation to it is able to recruit other bodies into the experimental system: potential guests, volunteers, journalists, farmers, tourism destinations, municipality officials, it is in itself not sufficient to sustain the experimental system and keep the bodies engaged in it. Eventually, as a member of the communication agency notes, many (potential) partners and collaborators who get drawn into the experimental system over time also fade out again. A member of the communication agency explains:

> If you want to dive in with them [the AfS] you need to bring along a lot of zest and time otherwise it won't work. I think that is really important if you

> want to work with them or for them […] Because to be quite frank, there have also been hard setbacks in the process that really eat you up. You have to be able to withstand that.

A hotel owner who collaborates with the AfS emphasizes how "[…] it is a perpetual 'yes' to the project. That's just what it takes, it demands a certain presence". The hospitality professional which has been part of the experimental system of the AfS for over ten years and with whom the AfS protected the brand points out that he is not sure how many partnerships could have survived the difficulties which they had to face together in trying to make this project into something more sustainable, giving and investing so much without any financial returns for years. He adds that the project's ability to forge an affective connection with the guests, but also with the AfS itself is what kept him engaged, as well as the ability to collectively laugh and be surprised at the turns the project was taking even if they were unpleasant or difficult. While this affective engagement and affirmation is constantly lingering in the experimental system and palpable when I talk to the AfS or other collaborators about the project, at times when something starts to 'catch on' it the experimental system, when it creates a kind of 'spark' that makes the AfS 'nervous', as they say, it turns into a more intense passion – an almost manic fever. It is this oscillation between the ongoing affective attachment to and the resurfacing of this 'manic passion' for this vague idea of what is yet to come and the small details that shape this process that keep the experimental system going (Latour & Woolgar, 1986). It causes others to become part of it despite all the difficulties and struggles it entails (Rheinberger & Schwab, 2013; Stallschus, 2013). Discussing the challenges of implementing the project, the representative of a tourism destination notes:

> To come back to what the [AfS] said at the [information] event, if the fire blazes hot enough it burns up every obstacle that is put into your way, […] and I think that is really how it is, it only moves forward.

5.2.3 Moving in a speculative process

The third feature that marks entrepreneurial experimentation and plays a crucial role in articulating epistemic things and regional ontologies is its processual dimension, which I discuss along two attributes. First, STS scholars such as Rheinberger & Hagner (1993) or scientists such as Fleck (1980) emphasize that new regional ontologies are articulated not within a singular event, but rather within the scope of

a continuous stream of experimentation – a successive process where one event of experimentation yields the next, forging an experimental 'texture' with fluctuating intensities (Rheinberger, 2001). Hence, experimentation is an ongoing and recurrent process, creating something which is never entirely stabilized. The AfS notes: "Our work actually is always a test. We never have the pretension to put up an immutable artwork. It is always an attempt." Over the years, the AfS has kept reimagining the *zero star hotel* and along this process its own entrepreneurial position. For instance, they rejected a million-dollar deal from Russian venture capitalists for the bunker version of the *zero star hotel*, fearing that the investors would undermine the artistic core of the concept. Instead, the AfS contacted different hotel owners to pursue the idea of opening several *zero star hotels* in urban areas of Switzerland before they eventually came up with the outdoor version. After struggling with the tourist destinations for further financing and becoming consternated and unsettled by the media hype, they withdraw the outdoor version, despite and because of its considerable success. Instead, the AfS starts playing with several new ideas such as doing a secret version secluded from the public eye and media and even considers 'freezing' the story of the *zero star hotel* by installing the room in an unused underground parking garage of a luxury hotel to reemphasize its radical artistic stance.

From its conception, the experimental system around the *zero star hotel* is an ongoing platform and serial process through which the AfS tries to explore its not yet articulated entrepreneurial configuration. While the epistemic thing which moves the experimental system of the *zero star hotel* every now and then crystalizes itself around a certain configuration, it never fully solidifies. It is an entity that escapes fixation and that keeps resurfacing – "[…]where there is always more to be said than any experimenter at any given moment is trying to tell" (Blackman, 2014, p. 379). The hospitality professional notes:

> This is also one of the particularities of Null Stern, […] I don't think any of us can decide tomorrow to say, okay, this is it, we're done, because we are continuously being called by schools […], it is always there, the media is always there, stories always come back.

It is through recurrent processes of questioning, testing, negotiating and shaping that a new entrepreneurial configuration, which at first often surfaces as a faint irritation, can slowly be settled into something more stable and demarcated (Rheinberger, 1994a), before it opens up again. One of the artists reflects: "That is something really central

to us, to push the boundaries and to continuously stay on the ball, and to go further and further and further." Especially when working with potential collaborators, the AfS is often frustrated because there is little willingness to commit to and invest in this ongoing process. After a meeting with a potential collaborator, the AfS is vexed. "They just wanted to implement the first idea we came up with, but that it is not how it works." One of the brothers adds: "There are no fast results. Everybody wants a quick and efficient big hit. They experience the medial resonance and it all looks so easy, but these are processes."

> *Processuality.* We sit around a sleek wooden table to discuss the zero star strategy for 2018. A tenseness inhabits the room. Michael and Fabian start by sharing their experience in finding collaboration partners for this year's edition. 'To be honest, we thought it would be much easier to sell it to potential partners'. 'The problem is the art!', Benjamin exclaims. 'You can't commercialize it because it's art. Right now, I am kind of sick of the art.' He suggests making a real commercial version, selling it out and then putting an end to the concept. Michael objects: 'This would never work. It is the art that makes it so successful. No one would be interested if it was some flat commercial version. The art needs to be protected even if it's business'. Mirai: 'How, though? I mean, we have tried.' She inquires whether partnering with Swiss Tourism would be an option. The others negate, 'at least not for now'. Frank reflects: 'This year, the zero star hotel was financially sustainable, we could pay off the money we used to protect the brand and we have this huge guestlist. We just need to see what happens.' There is a brief silence. Patrik ponders: 'Maybe we have to let go of the bed. I mean, when we protected the brand, we always said that it is not about the bed, it is about the spirit that the project enacts and transports.'

Second, entrepreneurial experimentation as a process is speculative and open, looking for answers without clearly defined questions. It is, as Rheinberger (1994a, p. 71) called it with reference to Derrida, a strategy without finality – "blind tactics, empirical roaming around". In the vignette, we see how in a speculative process the different collaborators and stakeholders involved in the *zero star hotel* attempt at grasping, how the potentiality of the project, its capacity to move people and attract guests could be configured into an entrepreneurial configuration. They try to explore and grope something which is only just taking shape, attempting to provoke answers to questions that have not yet been articulated properly (Rheinberger, 2012), making something emerge that is not yet imaginable and cannot be produced in a goal-directed way. Thinking back to the trajectory of the project, the hospitality professional notes:

> [W]hen I first called them, it is not like we had a master plan, absolutely not, and I mean this is also something you have to understand: everything that has happened in the last ten years, it has been very organic. Yes, we have always been thinking, yes, we have always been trying to develop a strategic plan but in a very organic way.

When the AfS thinks back to the various attempts at institutionalizing the *zero star hotel*, one of the artists notes: "We tried to implement it in several cities, but that didn't work. This didn't hurt, though. We don't have to fixate on something just because we had a supposedly good idea." The other artist adds: "You undertake something and have this openness." Thinking about a potential collaboration, he adds: "It is important to sit together and fantasize, it is not supposed to be a to closed concept from the beginning." As we can see in the vignette, this process of speculation is not driven by one individual, but rather shared and moved within a wider community. In the case of the *zero star hotel*, the AfS moves the project and the entrepreneurial configuration together with the capacities of a broader community of potential partners and stakeholders, such as the business partner and his wife, the communication agency that supports them in finding project partners as well as other collaborators such as local tourist organizations, mayors or even casual acquaintances. On a train ride, they encounter a contact with whom they start discussing their struggle to create a business model around the *zero star hotel* and the problem that 'the art is in the way'. He suggests that maybe it could work if they did it themselves or created a new company. Frank is sceptical: 'That wouldn't be credible'. Not only the community of people, but also those of nonhuman elements and ideas surrounding the AfS are actants and anchors in this process of speculation. The secret version speculates around and transfigures the intricate relationship with the media which the AfS cultivates, while the parking of the project in an underground garage builds on the history of the AfS who has worked previously in this spatial setting. One of the artists reflects the reuse and resurfacing of already existing ideas, objects and concepts and relational strategies in the development of their work: "One cannot just create new stuff, one also needs to adapt older ideas and place them, that can instigate a process." Over the years, they have developed something like a style of action and repertoire of ideas which propels and at the same time holds together this ongoing process of speculation by articulating a specific 'experimental culture' (Blackman, 2014; Rheinberger, 1994b). One of the artists reflects: "In a way, we create[d] our system, our own course of action, which to us is completely normal but for other people represents quite a strong contrast."

It is the meeting and interrelating of "these displacements and excesses" in this speculative process that forge alternative directions in which the process of experimentation moves (Blackman, 2014, p. 379). Eventually, the luxury hotel is reluctant to host the installation on its unauthorized fourth floor of the underground parking and the secret version struggles to materialize itself further due to the lack of potential financial partners. When the AfS stumbles on a newspaper article about a drastic drop in reservations at a formerly flourishing Swiss tourist destination, they consider passing on the *zero star hotel's* waiting list of several thousand potential guests under the condition that the region will install their own version of the *zero star hotel*. A journalist is interested in the story and puts it on the front page of a newly founded online newspaper. To the surprise of everyone, the tourist destination responds and contacts the AfS to discuss the collaboration. The idea to let others enact the idea of the artwork in a commercial 'cover' version while at the same time protecting its artistic core by hosting it under a new label emerges not in the scheduled strategy meetings, but at the intersection and layering of the capacities of a newspaper article, an acquaintance on the train, a journalist and a struggling tourist destination. Ultimately, the tourism destination takes on the offer of the AfS and installs as spin-off of the *zero star hotel* under the label 'zero real estate' according to the guidelines of the AfS while sharing parts of the revenue with them. A year later, the AfS starts working on expanding this new label to the six tourist destinations of Eastern Switzerland and the principality of Lichtenstein, getting them to collaborate on a shared project for the first time (image 14). At the same time, the potentiality of the zero star hotel reappearing in another, maybe more radicalized version keeps lingering in its experimental system.



Image 14. Seven tourism destinations preparing for their own 'zero real estate' spin-off
Credits: Claudio Baeggli

5.3 Human-nonhuman entanglements: reconfiguring systems of 'self-others-things'

After having carved out the microdynamics that allow to move and sustain the cultural entrepreneurial assemblage as a productive and disruptive experimental system, I now articulate a broader interpretation of the sociomaterial processes that shape cultural entrepreneurship by investigating the political capacity of this process of fabricating realities. I do this by re-reading and at the same time zooming more closely into this process of entrepreneurial experimentation, drawing upon Barad's (1999, 2007) notion of intra-active entanglement. Ultimately, so I argue, these new realities and regional ontologies which the entrepreneurial process matters and re-matters are "inescapably and intimately connected" to the way the AfS entangles and becomes entangled with various nonhumans in its entrepreneurial process (Dale & Latham, 2015, p. 167). I interpret the political capacity of this mattering of reality through Merleau-Ponty's (1962; see also: Knorr-Cetina, 1992; Hales, Riach, & Tyler, 2019) conceptual notion of the systems of 'self-others-things'.

> *Entanglements.* It is early in the morning. I am waiting on the train platform where I meet Frank. He asks me nervously whether I have seen his brother. I nod. 'Do you know whether he brought the scissors? I hope the CEO has been properly briefed about the necktie.' He goes on to tell me about the latest changes to the conceptualization of today's event with a corporate partner of the zero star hotel. 'We will still cut the necktie and take the photo, but we won't frame the tie pieces.' Apparently, the partner is not convinced of the implied symbolism. Frank still likes the idea. He adds: 'It would be a bit cheap anyway if they got an entire artwork for the price of an event.' He starts deliberating whether this could maybe be turned into some kind of edition. The discussion of money gives me a queasy feeling. In the meeting prior to the event, the AfS framed their role as consultants: 'It is not about marketing the artwork, but the experience that the artwork creates.' On the train, I study the content of the metal briefcase which Frank carries with him. It contains a mix of objects that must seem strange to an outsider and elicits a smirk on my face: several roles of painter's tape, formal looking documents, a couple of sketches and a detailed schedule, moderation cards, sunscreen and insect repellent.

In this vignette, the human-nonhuman entanglements created in the entrepreneurial process are tangible in the objects that are evoked in the conceptualization of the event with the corporate partner: the CEO's necktie, the scissors, the left-out picture frame. In the AfS' process of entrepreneurial experimentation, these entanglements are part of a performative network. They constitute a potential action and embodied experience at the corporate event: the 'cutting of the CEO's necktie'. At the same time, they are also constitutive of a potential image and story which can travel through social media and press: a dishevelled and excited CEO holding onto two halves of necktie in front of a white bed in the middle of the mountains. Ultimately, they also constitute the speculative idea of a (serial) artwork: a cut-up necktie in a picture frame as a materialized symbol of CEOs that are willing to rupture with their corporate routines and succumb to artistic practices. The different performative networks in which these entanglements surface also map different and at the same time intertwining productive layers of the entrepreneurial becoming in the experimental system of the AfS: the AfS as a creator of unusual actions and visceral experiences, the AfS as the creator of travelling images and stories, the AfS as the creator of disruptive encounters and material installations. Moreover, the silver brief case and its various contents points to different sociomaterial worlds which these entanglements are associated with. The entanglement between the artists body and the silver briefcase, the moderation cards, the formal documents and schedules evoke the sociomaterial world of contemporary business life and its organizational practices: project management tools and facilitation

strategies, legal formalities and billing processes, modern meeting rooms. Their entanglement with various rolls of painter's tape, the sketches and big scissors hint at the improvised becoming of artistic practices and the sociomaterial world of the studio space, while the sunscreen and the insect repellent evoke the practices and material world of outdoor life and adventurous expeditions. Each of these three sociomaterial worlds operates according to different modes of ordering (Law, 1994): The artistic world privileges sensual potentialities and aesthetic precision, the business world revolves around organizational professionalism and economic opportunities, while the expedition assemblage prioritizes an inquisitive demeanour and adventure. The intermingling of these different modes of ordering in the experimental system of the AfS creates productive synergies: the inquisitive demeanour (favoured by the expedition world), for instance, supports the exploration of aesthetic capacities (favoured by the art world); the artistic sense for potentialities (favoured by art world) can vibrate with the exploration of economic opportunities (favoured by the business world) while the notion of organizational professionalism (favoured by the business world) assists the pursuit of aesthetic precision (favoured by the art world). However, often the entangling of these hybrid productive layers and sociomaterial worlds in the process of entrepreneurial experimentation and the different regional ontologies which they fabricate also produces palpable tensions.

In the field episode described above, an uncomfortable feeling spreads in my body as Frank speculates about possible entrepreneurial configurations around the necktie, negotiating not only the aesthetic capacity of 'cutting the necktie' and its performative role in the conceptualization of the corporate event with the partner of the ze*ro star hotel*, but also its economic capacity, thus its role in the business assemblage of this partnership and the long-term entrepreneurial position of the AfS. A journalist who has been covering their different art projects over the years articulates that he feels that the tension between art and business in the sociomateriality of the AfS projects is what led local journalism to become more cautious in reporting about them:

> […] Like in this [local newspaper] there are some people that say: we will not write about them anymore, because you have one page that is culture and one page that is business and what are they doing, do they belong here or there? […] Also, the fact that they collaborate with companies to create art, that is really frowned upon. At best you can sell art-in-building projects, that is okay so you can eat again for a year, but you certainly cannot work closely with a company.

The human-nonhuman entanglements created in this process of entrepreneurial experimentation of the AfS, the way they link the sociomateriality of art: aesthetic images and surprising installations, unconventional performances and absurd actions with the sociomateriality of business: strategic partnerships and consulting, corporate events and continuous social media activity creates not only a new performative entrepreneurial network, but also an embodied sensation of discomfort and unintelligibility in and around the perception of the AfS' work. A similar tension is also at work in the playful, sensuous and explorative mode in which the AfS on the one hand works with the sociomateriality that constitutes its projects and activities and on the other hand the meticulous and careful professionalism that permeates the way they handle their work and the relationships that constitute it. A brother and early collaborator of the two artists notes with a laugh: "You don't see that at first sight. Sometimes when people enter the studio, they are surprised to see how many binders there are." This mixture of artistic unconventionality and rigor makes their work impactful but exacting for collaborators at times. He recounts how the three of them used teach a course on project management and staging publicity:

> Today they are masters, yes, pros at this. And a lot of people are startled, you know, they want to collaborate a little bit with them thinking 'artists, that is kind of fun' and eventually, they become alarmed by how serious they are and how professional in their everyday work, how challenging it can be to negotiate with them.

The performative intermingling of the sociomaterial worlds of art and business along different human-nonhuman entanglements in the process of entrepreneurial experimentation thus not only opens up new opportunities for the AfS, but also unsettles on a subtle yet physical level our embodied sensibility for and of those worlds.

In the process of entrepreneurial experimentation, these human-nonhuman entanglements are incessantly moving, constantly making new connections and associations. The necktie which the CEO is supposed to cut at the corporate event is also connected to the bodies of the artists who wear neckties on one of their very first self-portrait where they pose in suits in front of a red background (image 15) and later on a mountain hill for the posters of their speaker tour (image 16). At the corporate event, it turns out that the CEO was not properly briefed. He brings but refuses to cut his necktie. Eventually, the idea of the cut-up necktie re-associates with the CEO

of the *Saving Flies in Deppendorf* performance who cuts his necktie one year later for an image for a regional newspaper which features a long article about the AfS' artistic position (image 17). While they discuss the photo shooting with the journalist, the AfS fabulates how "[t]he cut-up necktie could become a symbol for a new track in the Swiss industry and employment". The movements and shifts of these various human-nonhuman entanglements around the necktie along this process of entrepreneurial experimentation is possible due to what Barad (2003) calls their ‚inherent ontological indeterminacy', thus their constitutive openness. Rather than being stable or fixed entities, materialities are constantly constituted through the very relationships that enact these human-nonhuman entanglements as specific phenomena. Their boundaries are porous and dynamic. They are 'malleable' as Knorr-Cetina (1992) puts it. The experimental process then constantly produces new agentic capacities, rearticulating materialities by shifting these human-nonhuman entanglements. After all, these agentic capacities are not located in the objects and bodies themselves, but rather belong to the intra-actions that are constitutive of those entanglements (Barad, 2003, 2007). At the same time, these intra-actions also create different meanings by tuning into different material layers and enacting different material boundaries. The entanglement of the necktie with the body of the CEO tunes into the haptic material layer of the necktie. It enacts its capacity and meaning of being worn and felt as a garment that expresses status and professionalism in business life. In turn, the intra-action of the necktie with the scissors tunes into the density of the necktie, it enacts its capacity and meaning of being cut and put behind a picture frame as a material resource in the process of creating an artwork while the intra-action of the necktie with a portrait of the artists tunes into its visuality and enacts its capacity to be transported as a symbolically charged shape across images. Of course, these intra-actions are interdependent rather than separate from each other. Different layers of meanings and matter reverberate across the phenomenon which they constitute: The necktie's expressive meaning as a professional garment feeds into its visual capacity as a symbolically charged shape or a material resource for a sculptural artwork and vice versa. Epistemic things then point to the lingering but subdued intra-actions and to other possible resolutions of such malleable matter. They intend to open up new agential possibilities within certain phenomena when for instance the cut necktie becomes a material-discursive practice of an artistic way of doing business.



Image 15. Early twin-portrait of the Atelier für Sonderaufgaben in suit and tie
Credits: Dave Bruellmann



Image 16. Early twin-portrait of the Atelier für Sonderaufgaben in suit and tie
Credits: Dave Bruellmann



Image 17. Early twin-portrait of the Atelier für Sonderaufgaben in suit and tie
Credits: Ruedi Bodo

The malleability of matter and the inherent ontological indeterminacy of human-nonhuman entanglements allows for the dynamic constitution and reconstitution of these entanglements and the mattering and re-mattering of reality in the process of cultural entrepreneurial experimentation (Barad, 2003, 2007). At the same time, it configures and reconfigures what Merleau-Ponty (1962) calls systems of 'self-others-things' (Knorr-Cetina, 1992), i.e. sociomaterial orders according to which in everyday life, our bodies and subjectivities, relationships to other humans and nonhumans are becoming and appearing meaningful (Barad, 2003). Such systems of self-others-things are routinely produced and reproduced in everyday organizational processes and become engrained in our embodied experience of the world (Dale & Latham, 2015; Hales, Riach & Tyler, 2019). Settling into collectively shared sociomaterial orders, they create the illusion of stability and fixation of those human-nonhuman entanglements and the materialities and bodies, capacities and meanings or phenomena which they enact. In the dominant sociomaterial order, neckties are not usually drawn upon as a resource to create art works and artists do not usually adorn themselves with them and their symbolism when addressing their audiences. Or artists are not usually thought of as organizing and documenting their projects along detailed plans and rows of binders. Meanwhile, contemporary art as a phenomenon is still not usually created in relation to business models or in collaboration with other organizations and institutions. The cultural entrepreneurial experimental system of the AfS, by performing a new agential cut through these sociomaterial orders, articulates a different 'inside' and 'outside' of legitimate artistic practices and subjectivities (Barad, 2003, 2007). The tensions and sense of unintelligibility or alarm evoked in collaborators and audiences produced by these shifting human-nonhuman entanglements along this process of entrepreneurial experimentation point to the embodied way that such a reordering of sociomaterial worlds is often resisted. Then again, the reconfiguration of such systems of self-others-things, its capacity of articulating and opening up new potentialities for other human-nonhuman relations and agencies, other meanings and subjectivities can also create appeal and fascination. The journalist who has been supporting and featuring the AfS' work continuously over the past ten years frames his attraction along as sense of relief from the constraints of the dominant sociomaterial order:

> I think that is why I jumped on it, because I think finally someone is disrupting this and says 'Why should we not also move things in the economic sphere with an art project? There is no contradiction in this' […] I have always supported that because I find that a beautiful intertwinement.

And when the writer, who accompanies the corporate event with the CEO sees the wooden bed of the *zero star hotel* suite under the cloudy sky in the middle of the mountains, he is visibly moved: "It is like something is opening up here." Ultimately, the cultural entrepreneurial experimentation of the AfS, by enacting a new cut through the human-nonhuman entanglements of art worlds re-matters art as a phenomenon: the capacities and meanings it can unfold and the relationships, roles and experiences we can have within it as a sociomaterial phenomenon. It produces art as shifting system of 'self-others-things' and simultaneously performative and powerful (re) configuration of the world (Barad, 2003). The embodied tensions and resistances which this reconfiguration can elicit in collaborators, partners and audiences' also points towards the 'onto-political' capacity of this process of re-mattering reality which I will consider in more detail in chapter 7.

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Null Stern Hotel
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'Can we form a new uncommon sense? Can we produce new sequences of strange and charmed? Can we form new maps of together?'

Q6

Nigel Thrift



6 Cultural entrepreneuring as ecology of intensities: affecting bodies

Cultural entrepreneurship in the process of assembling and reassembling sociomaterial relations and producing shifting human-nonhuman entanglements not only re-matters reality, it also transforms bodily relations. As I have discussed in the conceptual chapter, vital materialism emphasizes that there is no clear cut between the human body and the nonhuman world. Rather, the corporality of the lived body is interwoven in and enfolded with what Merleau-Ponty (1968) would call the 'flesh of the world'. The human body as 'body-subject' is immersed in a sensuous reality (Dale & Latham, 2015). It touches and is touched, it moves and is moved in an intensive relationship with the 'vital matter' with which it becomes entangled, being enveloped by different affective capacities through those encounters. By reassembling sociomateriality and subverting the modes of ordering that enact certain human-nonhuman entanglements, cultural entrepreneurship thus also articulates different body-subjects with other affective capacities. For this second analytic chapter, I will focus on the affective relations in cultural entrepreneurship by answering the following research questions: how does cultural entrepreneurship forge and navigate affective capacities and what kind of politics emerge from these affective processes? I thus investigate how cultural entrepreneurship is able to shape the affective configuration of art worlds and everyday life by articulating different 'body-subjects' and by moving the affective capacities of those bodies that become involved in its organizational processes.

To answer these research questions, I will zoom into one particular project of the AfS: the *BIGNIK* project, which through its strong participative dimension is particularly well suited to exploring affective relations and the constitution of different body-subjects in cultural entrepreneurship. In section 6.1, I will first examine how the entrepreneurial assemblage articulates a different affective ecology of encounter by coupling humans to agentic materiality, rhythmic time and a rhizomatic collectivity. I argue that these couplings constitute a different ecology of intensities by rearticulating our relationship with materiality, time and collectivity in a way that subverts the dominant modes of ordering. In section 6.2, I will then investigate through what tactics the entrepreneurial process moves affective capacities towards this ecology of

encounter. My analysis carves out the interplay of four 'affective tactics' – opening, articulating, attuning and opposing – that continuously shifts the affective capacities of bodies towards (re)coupling to this ecology. Finally, in section 6.3, I will explore how this ecology of intensities articulates a political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship. I unfold this political capacity by interpreting the 'structure of feeling' produced by the *BIGNIK* as an 'affective commons' that inflects bodies with different embodied experiences, affective capacities and subjectivities through its structure of feeling. My analysis underlines that this structure of feeling as shared resource is nurtured in a collective effort along different 'commoning' activities and at the same time is imbued with different tensions that surface from the unequal distribution of and access to the resources created by the affective commons.

6.1 The 'BIGNIK' as an ecology of encounter


Q7

In this first section I will analyse how the *BIGNIK* project and the way it entangles humans and nonhumans in its entrepreneurial process, articulates a different embodied experience of everyday life by opening up bodies to other relationships with the 'flesh of the world'. The *BIGNIK* project has been running since 2011 in collaboration with the communal development agency [CDA] of Eastern Switzerland, for whom the AfS conceptualized the project to create visibility for the remote region and to enhance the collaboration among inhabitants and different municipalities. By now, the project comprises around 3000 sewn modules. The artistic vision of the project aims at carrying on until 2043 and trying to create a blanket that will spread over the size of approximately hundred soccer fields when assembled. In both 2016 and 2018, the assembly of the blanket was cancelled due to unstable weather conditions. My analysis focuses in particular on the organizational processes in 2018 and 2019 as well as on the assembly of the blanket in *BIGNIK* 2019, when in response to the cancellations, it was laid out for the first time in the middle of a town on streets instead of fields.

For my analysis I will draw upon the embodied experience of participants such as I could observe them or as they have been voiced to me during my fieldwork as well as my own embodied experience of the project and process. I conceptualize these different sensations and embodied experiences through the notion of 'ecological coupling'. This notion as a merger of the vital materialist notions of 'ecology' (J. Bennett, 2010) and

'bodily coupling' (Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015) allows me to think embodied experience through the different relational connections that shape how participants encounter and move with the humans and nonhumans that enact the *BIGNIK* as a sociomaterial assemblage. It emphasizes the human body as a process rather than as an entity, and highlights how the human body in its porous, absorptive and responsive connection to his or her (or the) environment is always "extending beyond itself" (Blackman, 2008, p. 110), coming into contact with, coupling and conjoining with an ecology of other – human and nonhuman – bodies (J. Bennett, 2010; Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015). I will first show how the different embodied experiences at the *BIGNIK* are organized through three ecological couplings which connect human bodies to agentic materiality, a rhythmic flow of time and a rhizomatic collectivity. I will then in the fourth section discuss how these three ecological couplings by subverting sociomaterial orders that are implicitly inscribed in our everyday relations to materiality, time and collectivity articulate the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of resonating intensities.

6.1.1 Coupling bodies to unruly material capacities

For one, the ecology of encounter created along the entrepreneurial process of the BIGNIK rearticulates humans' embodied experience of materiality by creating an ecological coupling around the vibrancy, excess and care for the fabrics' capacities. This coupling instigates humans to come in contact with, move along and take responsibility for the fabrics as agentic materiality.

> *Vibrancy.* Patrik and Livia are arriving with cloth from the storage space. Together, we stack the piles of fabric on a little wagon. I slowly run my fingers over the fabric and imagine the pieces sewn together while Livia browses through finished modules and is enamoured by their weight and difference in style. The glass entrance of the town hall reflects the colourful, exorbitant sight into the train station, where it catches the glance of curious pedestrians.

In the process of collecting, sewing or assembling the blanket as well as in the images and videos about the project that circulate on- and offline, the human-nonhuman entanglements which the *BIGNIK* creates call upon participants to tune into the sensuous and aesthetic capacities of the fabrics. At a public sewing station, volunteers and pedestrians marvel at the different textures and patterns. When assembling the big blanket, volunteers are captivated by the striking intensity of its colours, which

articulate themselves against the greyness of the streets and houses, and by how vibrant and welcoming the town suddenly feels. One participant reflects how she was impressed that "the fabrics from afar emanate such a calm, ordered image, and then close-up they are all different". Other participants point to the special sensual feeling which the fabrics open up to them when they sit on or walk over them. They register the fabrics' varying temperatures when walking barefoot over the different modules and imagine the haptic difference between laying out the modules on the streets or in the field. Participants also note how the vibrant capacities of the fabrics transform people's relationship with space: "[I]f you imagine this space without the fabrics, people would be much less likely to sit on the gravel or on this square. Actually, the fabrics invigorate the entire zone." When I walk over the blanket, I have the impression that the space gently flows and enfolds my body, a tender feeling and a richness rising up in me. It is as though the fabrics' vibrant capacities, the luminous colours and the soft, flowing textures that wrap the streets make the space come alive. By entangling people and spaces with the fabrics along their visual and haptic qualities, the *BIGNIK* creates an ecological coupling of human bodies around the fabrics' vibrant aesthetic materiality. It instigates them to reconnect to their agentic capacity, thus to the way they are able to intensify experience, move and touch others – transforming participants' experience of the fabrics and the everyday life that unfolds around them.

> *Excess.* While we move the ceaseless sea of cloth from the car to the tables at the sewing station, Livia lets out an accentuated sigh: 'I have never seen that much fabric.' Meanwhile, Patrik starts joking that due to the growing population of the region the vision now goes on until 2048, wait, no, 2050. Livia laughs nervously. A volunteer who has helped several times glances over to the tables: 'It's just gigantic. I can't really picture where they store all this material.'

The organizational process of the BIGNIK: the growing blanket, the masses of fabrics, the increasing number of modules entangles humans and nonhumans with a material world that is excessive (image 18). In it the agentic capacities of the fabrics are overflowing and proliferating. A little boy that jumps over the blanket around a corner cheers: "It is incredible, it is still going on." In the town-version of the BIGNIK, one gets a sense of this excessive materiality assuming and pouring itself into everyday life, occupying its space. A participant notes: "The entire village has to cooperate and even if you just go by accidently you see it. […] You can't evade it, if you pass through or live here, you are engrossed by it." When I walk over the blanket and take

in how its expansive materiality has completely overtaken and redefined this little town, how it has leaked even into its smallest insignificant interstices, a feeling of reverence overcomes me. At times, this material excess is also overwhelming. A long-term volunteer notes: "It is madness. And well, the time it takes to tidy up all those modules and move them to the storage space… And, I mean the logistics of it all, it just kills you." In the group discussion on the organization of the *BIGNIK*, the challenge of handling and labouring this excessive materiality is a prominent topic. One volunteer reflects:

> I see the problems the longer, the more, because of the space, I mean it needs more and more space. […] They [the AfS] can say, well we can spare this little house somehow, but you encounter quite some challenges. But then they say that is what makes it interesting, right?

By coupling participants to the excessive capacities of the materiality of the fabrics, the *BIGNIK* instigates them to encounter the fabrics' agentic force of interjecting and interfering with our own trajectories and articulates an embodied experience of the fabrics as challenging, imposing and even problematic.



Image 18. Excessive materiality of the fabrics crumpled up in a car
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben

> *Care*. I lift my feet circumspectly as I walk over the blanket in my socks, careful not to disrupt the blanket. Some adults stumble as they tread barefoot, creating a little disturbance in the blanket. Immediately they stop to correct it. In the background I can hear a group of participants talking with an amused voice to a tourist who is stranded at the margins of the blanket, a little suitcase in his hand: 'You have to take off your shoes.'

By organizing the embodied experience of humans around the vibrant capacities of the fabrics, the human-nonhuman entanglements produced by the BIGNIK constitute an embodied experience of this materiality as a significant 'other' for whom people develop a sense of care and responsibility. When I walk over the blanket or eat on it, I am incited to be meticulous and attentive and I can observe this sense of respect and care also in other bodies: in the diligence with which people undo their sewing mistakes or in the mindful way that volunteers arrange the fabrics on the streets. Or it is palpable in the sense of concern which people express when they encounter the fabrics. Some participants worry about their wearing out and wonder: "What happens if they really get stained? Are they getting washed, are they never getting washed?" In doing so, they put their own actions in service of honing and protecting the fabrics' vibrant capacities. This sense of care and attentiveness towards the fabrics as a significant other also shines through in the playful responsiveness in which participants relate to it: Some adults advise their friends to sit on the white modules to drink white wine, children invent games that respond to the material multiplicity of the blanket: "If there are flowers on the fabrics then we try to pick them, if they are soft, we lay down." This care is also inscribed into the bigger entrepreneurial processes of the project. The *BIGNIK* is postponed or cancelled if the weather (and the wetness) threaten to tamper with the fabrics' integrity. In the beginning stage of the project, the CDA and the AfS even jokingly discussed whether they should make the blanket an 'olive-free' zone to prevent grease stains on the modules. The human-nonhuman entanglements enacted by the *BIGNIK* thus create an ecological coupling of human bodies to materiality of the fabrics which is organized around a sense of care. It instigates bodies to encounter the fabrics along a concern for protecting and celebrating their agentic capacities.

6.1.2 Coupling bodies to a rhythmic organization

Second, the ecology of encounters created along the entrepreneurial process of the *BIGNIK* also rearticulates bodies' experience with and encounter of the organization of time, creating an ecological coupling of human bodies to time around the unfolding of immersive, emergent and ongoing rhythms. This temporal coupling instigates humans to come in contact and move with time as a flexible movement that allows to coordinate and explore bodies in relation to their unfolding capacities.

> *Immersive.* I sit down at one of the three rows of wooden tables that remind me of primary school and start to pin together two different shades of white fabric. The more I let myself become aware of the textures of the cloths running between my fingertips, the way they connect, slip and crease, the more the bustle at the train station fades to the edge of my consciousness. The world around me conflates into slippery needles, tiny stitches and unruly fabric and envelops me with a pleasurable sense of calm and direction.

The human-nonhuman entanglements at the public sewing station and the way that their sensuous qualities unfold and intermingle with each other: the meditative clatter of the sewing machines; the occasional high pitched sound of tearing fabric; the punctuation of a laughter or a sigh commenting on the sewing process; the focused gaze of the volunteering bodies organizes the embodied experience of time around an immersive rhythm (image 19). In this immersive rhythm, time moves as a lingering flow that invites participants to become engulfed by their surroundings and the relationships and capacities that are present. It allows the when and how of the activities at the sewing station to unfold along participants' intricate relations with the other human and nonhuman bodies around them. An intern at the tourism agency that supports the public sewing event announces her intent to leave soon. Yet, an hour later she is still absorbed in the sewing process. In a similar way, the assembling of the ***BIGNIK*** opens up to the embodied experience of such an immersive rhythm. One participant tells me: "Did you see those kids, they should have gone home because they have some kind of party. Again and again, the father told them that they had to leave, but the children refused." The experience of this immersive rhythm is intensified because it often presents itself in contrast to the hectic unfolding of everyday life around it. One participant involved in the assembly notes:

> [Y]ou see all those people who are in a hurry to get from A to B, we saw two or three people who very quickly lowered their car windows, took a picture

> and then rushed on in the daily bustle. Meanwhile here on the blanket all is calm.

By coupling bodies to an immersive unfolding of time, the entrepreneurial process of the *BIGNIK* instigates participants and collaborators to encounter a temporal structure in which time is organized in a mesmeric manner around the capacities and inclinations of one's own body and its ongoing relationships with the world.



Image 19. Immersive rhythm at the sewing station
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben

> *Emergent*. I stand on the brink of the empty town square, on time, which means too early. The grass is still covered in dew and the gravel town square littered with puddles. Eventually the AfS and the CDA arrive and the first volunteers trickle in on the square. Some sit on the benches in the middle, waiting, others disappear into a coffeeshop nearby. As it turns out, the truck with the modules runs late. I don't quite know what to do with myself and pace around, agitated. Finally, the modules arrive.

The rhythmic flow of time in the entrepreneurial process around the *BIGNIK* is not only immersive but also emergent. It coordinates the various elements that need to assemble: the unpredictable weather, the transforming body of volunteers, the growing

amount of fabrics; in response to the different unfolding dynamics in the project. A volunteer participating in the assembly of the *BIGNIK* recounts his experience of this emerging rhythm:

> In the morning when you arrive here, you don't quite know how it is organized […] I noticed an uncertainty: Is it or is it not working out? The transporter is late and the ground still wet and this and that. And then suddenly the briefing takes place. […] and off it goes. And bam you have a line, and you already have a little plain.

When I follow the organizational process of the *BIGNIK*, I often get this feeling of time having a viscous quality and then suddenly becoming fluid: It meanders as it explores options or waits, and then suddenly, when the materiality starts coming together: the weather, the volunteers, the fabrics, it develops a momentum, speeds up and intensifies into something more structured and energetic. A collaborator points to the strain which this temporal unpredictability can create:

> There is a kind of fatigue that emerges if you have three dates and it never happens and the next year the first date doesn't work either […]. It somewhat weakens the euphoria for the event itself. […] It is a different experience if you constantly have to postpone your emotions a little bit.

I also often struggle to move along this unsteady organizational pace: My body becomes tense, numb, passive or agitated as I fail to adapt to this improvised organizational groove. However, when I and other participants eventually attune to this unpredictable, springy rhythm, it opens up an organic, embodied form of coordination that easily invites people to join in. Coupling bodies to an emerging rhythm, the *BIGNIK* thus instigates participants and collaborators to encounter a temporal structure which is organized flexibly in response to the dynamic unfolding of the various processes that structure the project.

> *Ongoing*. Patrik tapes a BIGNIK poster above the town hall display case while Bernadette hands him the tape. She looks at the tables, fabrics and sewing machines and, with a hint of surprise and pleasure asserts: 'Just like seven years ago.' At the sight of the sewing station, a pedestrian exclaims: 'You are still here. That is amazing!' A person stops to ask about the status of the project. 'We have 6 %'. He shakes his head: 'Incredible, it is a generational project.'

Eventually, in its perseverance, the entrepreneurial process also articulates an embodied experience of time as an ongoing rhythm that threads through the continuity of the comings and goings of these entanglements. The people involved in and encountering

the entrepreneurial process are positively surprised by the longevity of the project. The long-term time horizon of the project inspires participants to imagine what the project could become over time: an institutionalized cultural performance or a new regional tradition that contributes to a different regional identity? The artists ponder excitedly: "We don't know what BIGNIK will be in ten years." The ongoing rhythm opens the temporal expectations that usually shape such participative art projects and public sector-art collaborations around manageable time horizons, short-term goals and quick medial impacts. One participant notes:

> I am curious to see how many people will participate because the project has been running a couple of years. In itself it is a very free idea that now exercises itself in a kind of stoicism, right, and I am kind of curious how much, in this very fast-paced society, it is already being tuned out, or whether people still take notice of it.

Many collaborators state that this ongoing rhythm renders it difficult to sustain the energy, enthusiasm and resources for the process. A participant notes: "I have the feeling at some stage it will crumble. At some point the flow will be gone and then it just won't happen anymore." The ongoing rhythm of the organizational process of the *BIGNIK* thus creates an encounter with a temporal structure that organizes bodies slowly and persistently without a clear end in mind, building on the fragile capacities that are continuously created in the process.

6.1.3 Coupling bodies to a rhizomatic collectivity

Third, the sociomaterial assemblage of the *BIGNIK* and the organizational processes that constitute its entanglements also rearticulate human bodies' experience of 'togetherness', creating an ecological coupling of humans to an open, intimate and productive collective. This ecological coupling instigates humans to come in contact and move within a notion of collectivity that is rhizomatic, constantly inviting participants into close encounters and new connections with others while articulating them as constitutive to an emerging collective agency.

> *Open*. The woman working next to me explains how she just stumbled upon the project after her museum visit. Later, two young Somali refugees join the sewing station. The other volunteers watch in rapture as their trained hands sew in lighting-speed. A group of male teenagers nearby glance sheepishly at the piles of fabrics. I ask them whether they want to try as well. They laugh self-consciously: 'He does maybe later.'

Along its processes of collecting and sewing fabrics as well as assembling and eating on the blanket, the *BIGNIK* organizes an experience of togetherness that is open, constantly inviting other people to become part of it. At the sewing station I notice how my own and others' bodies are moved by encountering all the different people who are interested and participate in the project. The assembled blanket offers a similar embodied experience of an open collective. A participant on the blanket notes: "It is wonderful […] that you bring people together, people that you do not necessarily know beforehand. You can sit anywhere and then maybe start chatting with somebody if you feel like it." Although people usually sit on the blanket in groups or by themselves, the connection created through the fabrics and the shared blanket articulates a sense of togetherness and allows a multiplicity of bodies to interact and clash beyond the scope and familiar social boundaries of an ordinary picnic. At the same time, this articulation of an open collective is also evoked in the way that the processes around the *BIGNIK* invite people into creating a public artwork who often are at the margins of contemporary art worlds: farmers, immigrants or country women. A participant who attends the *BIGNIK* for the first time observes that there "is just such a welcoming culture; everything is okay, everything fits". This imagined community is also invoked by the materiality of the fabrics and the modules which are 'biographically charged' with the traces of this open collective and its workings. In the process of assembling the blanket, participants wonder about the people who have sewed and donated the fabrics or sat on those very modules before. By coupling human bodies to an open collective, the project thus instigates them to encounter and become part of an expanding, permeable community that constitutes the project as much as its materiality.

> *Intimate.* Sitting on the blanket, I am astonished how homely the public space has become. The floor is surprisingly comfortable, and the noise of conversations and shrieking children embraces me with a warm muffled tone. I observe a family immersed in playful banter. Further up, a group of girls is lying on their back in the middle of an alley. It is as though the living rooms of those adjacent houses had sneakily oozed into the streets.

By enfolding human bodies in a sprawling world of fabrics, the human-nonhuman entanglements at the *BIGNIK* evoke an embodied experience of a collective that is not only open but also intimate. At the sewing station or while I watch the *BIGNIK* documentation on the fabric collection, I encounter different people and fabrics, dusty

attics and neatly organized cupboards, but also the personal stories that are attached to those fabrics, people and spaces. In these encounters, foreign bodies suddenly become near, giving me an intimate glimpse of their histories, memories and hopes. The two artists continuously celebrate this kind of close encounter with which they meet and entangle others in the process. One of the artists notes: "[W]e create a closeness where you can say it couldn't be more private, and I think that is a little bit our childlike, genuine demeanour and not having the expectation to be efficient." This embodied experience of an intimate collective is also driven by the fabrics' ability to invite a sense of closeness between different participants by staging and inviting private and domestic lives into public spaces. A woman who sits in front of her house on the *BIGNIK* blanket jokes that she has an extended porch now. In privileging close relations and embodied connections to others through the collective engagement with the fabrics, the *BIGNIK* also rearticulates feminine values and practices in the public sphere, making them visible and capable in the context of public art. By coupling participants to the intimate collective that emerges along the vibrant capacities of the fabrics, it thus instigates them to be moved by the close encounters with the human and nonhuman world that articulates itself around the project.

> *Productive*. On the way to a meeting Frank and Patrik discuss the assembly of the BIGNIK. 'We need 100 volunteers who help to put it together at the end, otherwise we won't do it.' Frank hesitates: 'I am not sure that this is the right message.' They carry on debating the vision of BIGNIK and how it all depends on people's commitment. Patrik nods: 'The utopia is at the core. It is not our job to evangelize or to force anything. The concept is here.'

Eventually, the human-nonhuman entanglements which articulate the *BIGNIK* as ongoing, growing and participative artwork also create embodied experiences of collectivity which coalesce humans and nonhumans around the shared production of and contribution to an idea and a process (image 20). Many participants point out how wonderful it is to create something together. When I help sew or assemble the blanket, I sense purpose and excitement, motivation and (com)passion enveloping us as we co-create the project and become part of this collective endeavour. The way people inhabit the blanket and react to the *BIGNIK* also contributes to this embodied experience of a productive collective. A participant notices how

> […] there are people, they didn't help set up the blanket and they are simply having a picnic, entire clans who spread out and wear traditional clothes,

> with this Chinese sunshade, the oversized hats and the flowers in their hair, they stylistically add something to the BIGNIK's colorfulness […].

The materiality of the project is articulated around the ongoing contribution and voluntary effort of a wide range of people, be it in the process of donating fabric, sewing modules, assembling the blanket or participating by sharing a meal. The AfS is careful to protect this collective engagement as a constitutive dimension of the *BIGNIK* project in the organizational process and frequently turns down corporate requests for 'renting' the blanket. They note: "People cannot use *BIGNIK*, they can only work on its vision." By coupling bodies to a productive collective, it thus instigates them to encounter and become part of this shared effort and experience the different kind of collective agency which it unfolds in the process of co-constituting this long-term art project.



Image 20. Productive collective at the assembly of the 'BIGNIK' blanket
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben

6.1.4 An ecology of resonating intensities

As I have unfolded in the past three sections, the entrepreneurial process around the *BIGNIK* project articulates a different ecology of encounter by coupling human bodies to unruly material capacities, to a rhythmic organization of time as well as to a rhizomatic collectivity. These ecological couplings on the one hand enact a subtle subversion of the sociomaterial order that usually organizes our everyday relations to materiality, time and collectivity in our everyday lives. On the other hand, these couplings, by articulating a different "interplay of bodies" also forge other 'moments of intensity' (Wolfe, 2010, p. xxiii; O'Sullivan, 2001) that emanate from the different relational capacities that constitute the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of encounter: the capacities of the fabrics, the weather, the fields, streets and landscapes in which the *BIGNIK* processes are embedded, the capacities of the artists, the different volunteers and collaborators. The myriad affective capacities circulating in the ecology of the *BIGNIK* and the way they resonate and overlay articulate an ecology of intensities that "inspires, suggests, or provokes a specific kind of embodied experience (Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019, p. 8; Gregg, 2018).

For one, by coupling human bodies to the fabrics around vibrancy, excess and care the entrepreneurial ecology of the *BIGNIK* instigates human bodies to experience these fabrics as vital and unruly 'other' with the capacity of shaping and intensifying life as well as imposing on or threatening it. It articulates materiality as agentic, hence as an intriguing, wilful, fragile and resistant force that has its own 'thing power' in the process of constituting the *BIGNIK*, pulling us in and surprising us (J. Bennett, 2010). This coupling to agentic materiality subverts the dominant sociomaterial order in which the fabrics of the picnic blanket are usually related to as passive matter, being invoked as inanimate materiality at the backdrop of the social situation where their agentic capacities are pacified and shaped in an objectified way around the needs and conveniences of the human beings involved. This coupling allows for the circulation of an affective intensity that I frame as *vitality*. It flashes in the intensity of feeling that overcomes volunteers when organizing and labouring this excessive materiality: "[We were] sewing from eight o'clock in the morning until one o'clock at night. It was crazy, also this photo shoot on the roundabout, and how we transported the sewing machines and tables there." Or it vibrates in collaborators' stories of the strange encounters they make as the get involved in the entrepreneurial process: the brick layer who gets angry

when the AfS tries to explain the project or the woman who doesn't want to donate her blankets and starts yelling.

Second, by coupling human bodies around immersive, emergent and ongoing rhythms, the ecology of the *BIGNIK* instigates human bodies to experience and connect to time as rhythmic and flexible movement that allows to coordinate and explore bodies in relation to the unfolding capacities. Rhythms, as Deleuze & Guattari (2013) point out, rather than operating as 'blind regularity' on the world (Kleinherenbrink, 2015), constitute themselves through the natural attunement of the different elements and the capacity of letting time unfold along being in 'reciprocal determination' with the affordances and events of an environment (Grosz, 2008). The project thus shifts participants' sensible experience towards time as an embodied and responsive flow that opens up to contingency, change and disturbance by trying to conquer and consolidate the variation of comings and goings in a certain situation more than by creating predictable harmony (Grosz, 2008; Kleinherenbrink, 2015). This coupling to rhythmic time subverts the dominant sociomaterial order in which time in everyday organizational life is experienced as directive: organizing our engagement with time along clocked schedules which leave little room for the body to become swept up by the world around it and where life is orchestrated around a temporal structure that tries to get a hold of us in order to organize us towards predefined goals. This coupling allows for the circulation of an affective intensity that I frame as *presence*, and that lingers in the mindfulness with which people handle the modules when they are immersed in assembling the blanket or in the sensation of becoming completely engulfed by the materiality of the fabrics in the process of sewing. Or it is evoked when a participant speaks about his experience of attuning to a different pace while on the blanket, noting how "if you are not constantly chasing your everyday life, then you have the time to observe, watch and perceive – time for encounters".

Third, by coupling human bodies to an open, intimate, and productive collective around the shared engagement with the fabrics, the ecology of encounter created through the *BIGNIK* instigates bodies to experience a form of togetherness that is rhizomatic, organizing itself and forging its collective agency around close embodied encounters and the open participation and contribution to a collective process that continuously shapes itself around the ongoing surge of capacities. It thus articulates participants' sensible experience of collectivity around a 'sociality' (Wolfe, 2010), in

which humans become 'allies' with a multiplicity of other humans and nonhumans: the fabrics, the participants, the farmers, the policemen, the truckdriver in the process of co-creating and producing this artistic project (Roelvink & Zolkos, 2015), and where "the perceptual presence of bodies that are no longer present remain as affective energy – traces, residues or resonances" (Bell & Vachhani, 2020, p. 688). This coupling to a rhizomatic collectivity subverts the dominant sociomaterial order in which collectivity is predominantly experienced as functionalistic: contemporary art worlds producing collectivity as closed milieus rather than open communities where our encounters and relationships with other unfamiliar human and nonhuman bodies are often distanced and consumptive, us using and drawing upon their collective presence rather creating it. This coupling allows for the circulation of an affective intensity that I frame as *(be) coming together*. One volunteer evokes this intensity by voicing her own excitement about the project: "It is crazy to see how if you do something together, you instantly achieve [something]." Or participants allude to the flow of this intensity when they note how "the blanket is a uniting force" or when they frame the *BIGNIK* as "big artwork which celebrates this togetherness where not everyone is sitting in their own corners – or at home".

Eventually, the ecology of encounter in the entrepreneurial process of the *BIGNIK* also emanates an intensity that I call *potentiality*, a sense of opening, that things could be otherwise, different. This intensity, rather than being tied to one particular coupling emanates from the interplay of coupling bodies to agentic materiality, rhythmic time and rhizomatic collectivity and the way they subvert dominant sociomaterial orders. A participant points to this feeling of potentiality by noting how the project articulates "[s]omething that [draws] you out of everyday life, being crazy, just unusual, something that brings other thoughts to your mind". Or it resonates with the many ways that participants when talking about what draws them to the project refer to this feeling and intensity that is embodied in its material processes – that everyday life, space and society somehow could be organized differently. For an overview of the three couplings that organize the ecology of encounter at the *BIGNIK* see table 6.

Table 6. Overview of the ecological couplings organizing the ecology of encounter at 'BIGNIK'

	materiality	temporality	collectivity
intensity	*vitality*	*potentiality* / *presence*	*(be)coming together*
ecological coupling	agentic	rhythmic	rhizomatic
	vibrant / excessive / cared for	immersive / emergent / ongoing	open / intimate / productive
subverted order	inanimate / contained / objectified	clocked / orchestrated / goal-oriented	closed / distanced / consumptive
	passive	directive	functionalistic

These four intensities that emanate from the different ecological couplings layer, overlap and resonate with each other. The intensity of vitality emanating from surprising encounters pairs and resonates with this sensation of being and becoming present. Or when sewing, collecting fabric or assembling the blanket, presence as an intensity layers and heightens the experience of (be)coming together. The sense of openness immanent to the experience of potentiality at the same time also intensifies again the sense of vitality. In their intersection they articulate the *BIGNIK* as a rich and resonating ecology of intensities. At spatialized events such as the public sewing sessions or the assembly of the blanket, this ecology of intensities often thickens into an 'affective atmosphere' (B. Anderson, 2009). However, it also lingers in the spatially less dense, moving arms of the entrepreneurial process and its fleeting encounters: in the meeting of the artists' bodies with potential fabric donors, or in the virtually and orally travelling stories and images of the *BIGNIK*. The AfS is aware that the creation of such moments of intensity is a central aspect of the art project, noting that "[i]t is not about the number of people [that participate] or the number of modules which are laid out. It is about the intensity which is created".

6.2 (Re)coupling bodies: affective tactics

In order to create the *BIGNIK* as resonating ecology of intensities, the entrepreneurial process around the project needs to move bodies and their affective capacities towards enacting this ecology of encounter. This entails instigating bodies to adopt, embrace and move along those couplings to agentic materiality, rhythmic time and rhizomatic collectivity which I have carved out in the last section and which are constitutive of the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of intensities. In this section I now investigate through what tactics the entrepreneurial process continuously attempts at moving the affective capacities of bodies towards (re)coupling with the ecology of the *BIGNIK*. The analysis shows that the interplay of four affective tactics: *opening*, *articulating*, *attuning* and *opposing* allows the entrepreneurial process to forge body-subjects that support and sustain the *BIGNIK*. As relational and situational maneuvers, these four affective tactics produce "distribution of intensities which prefigure encounters, which set up encounters and which have to be worked on in [those] encounters" (Thrift, 2008, p. 116).

In section 6.2.1 to 6.2.4, I will first introduce the four affective tactics individually by (1) elaborating through what relational maneuvers and what reordering strategy each of the tactics operates and (2) by discussing how consequently each of them is geared towards articulating specific affective bodies with certain affective capacities and embodied feelings in relation to the *BIGNIK* and its sociomaterial processes (for an overview of the four tactics see table 7 in section 6.2.5). Both human and nonhuman bodies have agency and play a role in the articulation of in these tactics. In section 6.2.5, I then unfold how their intra-active interplay is able to move bodies' affective capacities towards enacting and holding together the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of intensities, and discuss how in their attempt at reordering our sociomaterial entanglements these tactics at times also create affective infractions.

6.2.1 Opening: constituting wonderous encounters

Relational maneuver. Opening as an affective tactic aims at creating new encounters by subtly rupturing the sociomaterial boundaries that organize our embodied experience of everyday life. The vibrant and excessive materiality around which the *BIGNIK* process constitutes itself – the sprawling public sewing stations, the red and white

blankets wrapping towns or spreading on fields – has a central agency in enabling such new encounters by rupturing, for instance, the implicit boundary of how a picnic is organized or how (and where) sewing takes place. A photographer who takes aerial pictures of the *BIGNIK* explains that despite not liking art in general he was instantly drawn to and fascinated by this project and the surprising encounter created through its materiality:

> It looks very special from above because you just see this enormous blanket around a town or on a field and when you sit in the helicopter, you have the impression that it is just a normal picnic blanket you have laid in the grass in front of you.

In the way that the materiality of the *BIGNIK* creeps into and disrupts familiar spaces (the town, the train station), it invites bodies to become affected in a new way by their surroundings. At the same time, it moves their affective capacities towards the collective process that articulates itself around the fabrics and their aesthetic force. The slow but playful engagement, which the fabrics demand and at the same time instigate, supports this forming of new encounters. In a group discussion, a member of the steering committee recounts how the attitudes of the chairpersons changed when they got involved in an embodied way with the materiality of the project by referring to a picture of the sewing station:

> It was interesting, if those who were in opposition [to the project] stood on the blanket, if they could do something or sewed one of those modules [they transformed]. There is still this mountain of fabric that is threatening to collapse in the background. However, if you could sew here in the front or get engaged some other way, everybody suddenly was in on it.

A member of the CDA mirrors this by noting: "When [the politicians] were involved in the sewing and collecting, when they were closer to the process, then it was easier to convince them than if there was this distance between [the project and them]." A Deleuzo-Spinozian reading of affect presupposes that bodies need to have a certain 'speed' to mix (Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020). The hands-on contact with the agentic capacities of the fabrics along an immersive rhythm is able to affect and move the bodies of those chairpersons towards the project, shifting their experience of this transformed sociomaterial boundary from imposing and threatening towards its more pleasurable and exuberant capacities in the encounter.

The embodied style of relating enacted by the artists towards the people and materialities around them intensifies this affective tactic of opening. The photographer, who initially was a mere service provider for the project, still remembers one of the first meetings with the twin artists:

> [O]ne of them, I don't know which one, told us that they just had a fight and it was difficult for them right now and he wanted to know whether we, my boss and I, also fight. […] I found that really funny and strange. Not in a negative way, but I mean of course people fight, everybody fights, but to talk about this?

Encountering this form of emotional honesty and intimacy in what the photographer considers a business relationship is unusual and surprising for him. It ruptures the boundary of the distanced professionalism expected in such situations and moves the photographer's affective capacities towards leaving the scope of a transactional business relation and becoming part of this process and intimate collective. The playful way in which the AfS addresses the various complications and frictions that arise along the process of realising the *BIGNIK* is another way to enact this tactic. In response to the concerns of a restaurant owner, for instance, the AfS develops a 'tire slipper' station to enable cars to drive over the blanket if necessary. This solution ruptures the sociomaterial boundary of how traffic is normally organized and transforms a potential interruption of the blanket into an act of material care and simultaneously astonishing encounter. The mayor of the town notes how effective this playful rupturing of boundaries around pleasurable and surprising encounters was at the information event for residents:

> That evening, somebody came, a resident and I already thought to myself 'oh, dear she will tell us, you are you completely out of your mind.' And she also had that kind of face and at the end she left, radiating, saying goodbye to everybody and before she didn't see anyone. And I thought, amazing how with their style [the AfS] is able to open up people for this.

Affective body. Opening as an affective tactic aims at moving the affective capacities of bodies towards the *BIGNIK* ecology by constituting 'wondrous' affective bodies. Hence, bodies that are surprised in a pleasant way by the relations which they experience in these new encounters through those ruptured boundaries. It is enacted on different levels and in different configurations of the *BIGNIK* project. The agentic capacities of the fabrics are central in constituting this sense of wonder by slowing bodies down and allowing for new encounters to emerge, while the artists' embodied style of relating

often emphasizes and intensifies this rupture of sociomaterial boundaries. At best, when the speed of encounter is right, this movement of affective capacities proliferates. Other people who get entangled with the project also pick up this affective tactic and start performing it. The collaborators mirror it when they adopt this playful mode of tackling problems in meetings: fantasizing how the Swiss army will help to set up an enormous blanket in ten, twenty years or how national public transport will provide extra trains to Eastern Switzerland on the day of the *BIGNIK*. Or the farmer enacts it when he tours with a megaphone on his tractor to collect fabrics, rupturing the implicit boundary of who operates in public space and how.

Opening creates a short and often fleeting shift in the everyday affective capacities of those bodies. In a Deleuzo-Spinozian reading, these joyful affects are 'passive' in so far as that they happen to bodies upon encountering other affective bodies (the fabrics, the shutdown streets, the artists, the chaotic but immersive process), rather than being actively sought out (Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020). At times, this change in affective capacity can leave bodies in a kind of twisted affective state. The member of the steering committee notes how many chairpersons have an ambivalent relationship with the project: "On the one hand, they think 'Those artists, they are nuts. That cannot work.' And on the other hand, they say, 'Well the overall idea isn't that bad' and get entrained by the sewing." The transformed affective capacity elicited by the new encounter created through the *BIGNIK* cannot quite override those implicit sociomaterial boundaries and the concerns that they articulate. In a similar way, the restaurant owner expresses ambivalent feelings towards the slipper station and the AfS' mode of problem solving: "Ultimately, no-one wanted to try out those slippers, people parked and walked. […] It would have been a nice gag if someone tried it […]." Despite the productivity of the slipper station and its playful materiality in making different affective capacities circulate: getting guests to walk to the restaurant without being offended and rendering participants (including the restaurant owner) intrigued rather than annoyed by a potential interruption on the blanket, it is not quite able to shift the restaurant owner's affective capacities beyond the sociomaterial boundary of a functionalistic understanding of efficiency.

6.2.2 Articulating: generating active desire

Relational maneuver. Articulating as an affective tactics then aims at forging (new) common notions by imagining alternative sociomaterial orders. Many participants point to such common notions, by talking about how this notion of 'doing something together' but also this notion of 'contributing to a bigger project or vision' is central to their own desire to contribute to the project of the *BIGNIK*. Common notions are also formed around the unusual encounters which this long-term collective process opens up. A farmer who has been supporting the project since its early days explains his commitment by referring to the special experiences that have opened up to him by becoming part of the project: "I mean, I don't want to say anything, but I did benefit quite a bit, the driving from village to village alone was so much fun. You met many people; it was glorious." Others again form it around the different aesthetic experience and public space that the project articulates. One participant notes: "I am a very visual person and I find Switzerland would do well with much more colour and that's why I enjoy it. It is nourishment for my eyes, those colours, those colour arrangements […]." Although the common notions which bodies form focus on different relational processes in the project, participants still develop a sense that the project organizes bodies around a shared interest. One participant points out that "how people get together, how they collectively stand up for an idea and execute it" as one of the core sensations at the event. Another participant expresses her impression that this shared common notion is also what makes the coordination and organization of the process somehow easy and fluent: "Probably all have the same interest [in the project]. That is why it works."

Bodies can form a common notion around the *BIGNIK* spontaneously by linking their own desires, affective capacities and dispositions to the experiences around the project. However, the AfS also tries to forge such common notions actively by drawing upon articulating as an affective tactic. Articulating is geared towards creating such common notions by not only rupturing the sociomaterial boundaries that organize our everyday lives, but by more purposefully articulating alternative imaginaries of how everyday life could be organized. This articulation helps to create an emotionalization, thus a purposeful desire in bodies by producing a common understanding of how coupling to the *BIGNIK* creates different affects and at the same time also an alternative imaginary of what could happen. In the organizational process of the *BIGNIK*, such

articulations often happen fleetingly. For instance, when at the public sewing station, the AfS informs the curiously glancing pedestrians that the project is running until 2043 and claims that they are creating 'unusual communities'. Through this invocation, the people donating fabric, the bodies working on the modules at the sewing station and the piles of fabric draped on tables or stacked on wagons are connected to the idea of a long-term project and an alternative imaginary of community. Articulating this connection enables bodies to form common notions around the affection of contributing to an ongoing art project or being part of a rhizomatic collectivity.

While the articulation in this situation is improvised, this affective tactic can also be drawn upon in a carefully staged manner, for instance as the project is pitched to specific audiences. When the AfS presents the *BIGNIK* to the residents of the town where it will take place, different material elements are purposefully invoked and interwoven: visualizations showing the potential aerial view of the town covered by the blanket as well as video fragments documenting humorous encounters while collecting fabrics are mixed with a language that works through the invocation of images such as 'a fluid made out of fabric' or 'a constantly expanding artwork' and the use of expressions such as 'asphalting' or 'becoming accomplices'. Through the interweaving of those different elements, the pieces of fabric are imagined as a form of flexible paint that colours everyday spaces and transforms them into sites with different kinds of social potentialities. The way the AfS draws upon language and concocts its own terminology also works when it is presented to people in a written form, on social media or in the press. However, it seems to become even more powerful when this language is experienced in an embodied way: when the words are articulated along the rhythm and sound of public speaking. When they are interwoven with other images and artefacts. This difference is evoked by a member of the audience at the information event, who notes: "I have read about it and seen images before, but now there is more excitement behind it, after hearing it life." One long-time collaborator of the AfS points out that this is something he finds fascinating about the work of the AfS: "They have this visionary imagination that can initiate social dynamics." A member of the steering committee echoes this sentiment: "[B]ecause the idea of knotting fabric together, that is one thing, but what it can trigger, the symbol, that is really interesting."

Affective body. Articulation as an affective tactics is aimed at creating a stronger, less temporary shift in the affective capacities of bodies, moving them towards enacting

the ecology of the *BIGNIK* in a more purposeful and sustained manner by creating what Spinoza frames as 'active desire'. This deliberate active desire builds, as Spinoza notes, around this common notion as shared understanding of and shared interest in the relationships which are constitutive of those positive and pleasurable affects (Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020). The common notion of 'togetherness', for instance, creates an 'active desire' in bodies to engage in the project even when their affective capacities and dispositions make them reluctant to couple to such a process. A woman at an information event of *BIGNIK* explains that she normally struggles with such big projects and actually does not like engaging in them. Yet, she wanted to find out how she could contribute because "one has to do things together". Different long-term volunteers and supporters of the project evoke the experience of this active desire as 'being pulled into the project', or 'being infected by the BIGNIK virus'. The artists are well aware of the importance of such an 'active desire' for their work. In a tv interview one of the artists notes: "You can do [the BIGNIK] only if people feel a certain emotionalization, a certain desire to work and sew on this vision and start to picture what it actually means if more and more modules are put together."

Articulating as a mode of encounter not only seeks to spark an 'active desire' towards enacting and supporting the project and its alternative imaginary, but it is also interested in forming particular 'affective bodies', bodies that are 'excited' or 'passionate', willing to mobilize their own capacities and agencies to enact and couple to the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of intensities. This excitement and commitment is present when inhabitants, unsolicited, send fabrics to the AfS, or when a volunteer gets hold of a sewing machine and donates it to the project. It is also palpable when participants start coming up with their own ideas of where the *BIGNIK* could go next. The AfS often draws on videos that document people's reactions to and thoughts on the project to make those 'affected bodies' and their understanding of the project visible and accessible for those who are not quite affected yet, thus creating more opportunities for an affective movement in these bodies. Different participants note how they are fascinated by this infectious affective pull which the project creates in themselves and others. Seeing how the information event was able to open up and excite people in an unexpected way, the mayor notes that "[i]t creates something like a high when you notice how this can spill over into the heads of others, people you would have not even reckoned with". Eventually, the language which propels the affective tactic of articulating is also appropriated by other bodies than those of the artists. When talking about the project,

the mayor herself refers to the notion of 'asphalting' to discuss the town version of the *BIGNIK* and a member of the CDA notes how despite initial resistance, she started to take on the AfS's terminology: "[A]t first my reaction is often 'well this is kind of semi-funny' and then later I notice, well it is actually spot on."

6.2.3 Attuning: fostering trusting relations

Relational maneuver. Attuning as an affective tactic aims at exploring the geo-historicities of bodies and accommodates the boundaries that organize their embodied experience of everyday life. After all, opening and articulating do not always forge joyous affective encounters in the involved bodies. Frequently, they also produce alienation or frustration in the bodies that are subjected to them. The different affective thresholds and hence different ways in which bodies can (or cannot) be moved joyfully through these encounters, this rupturing of sociomaterial boundaries and this articulation of alternative imaginaries are constituted by the geo-historicity of bodies (B. Anderson, 2014). In the Somali refugee, the encounter with the fabric vibrates pleasurably with the affective memory of his former profession as a tailor. Or the tactile engagement with fabrics and the creative occupation of space resonates with participants' affective memories of a playful childhood. However, in some volunteers, the affective memory of their struggles with home economics at school make for an affectively more ambivalent encounter at the sewing station. The geo-historicity of bodies also shapes the ease with which bodies not only become pleasantly moved, but also form a shared understanding around the project. The mayor reflects the role of her willingness to take risks in supporting the project by noting: "If I would had been too scared, I would probably have said no, that doesn't work." The affective thresholds of her body allowed her to form a common notion around the *BIGNIK* despite the resistances that she knew it could provoke in the town. Similarly, a member of the communication agency who supported the AfS in the initial conceptualization of the project points out that the affective threshold in the bodies of the CDA was a critical success factor for the project. After all, "[t]he CDA as a partner could easily have killed the whole project after the initial difficulties if they had just done everything by the book". Similar to the mayor, the affinity of the CDA members for unconventional cultural projects and their interest in collaborating and fostering the regional creative scene forged affective thresholds that allowed the project to thrive despite difficulties.

As the geo-historicity of bodies renders their affective capacities more or less inclined to having pleasurable experiences around the encounter with the project, attuning as an affective tactics is used to be present, explore and engage with these geo-historicities. Attuning is enacted for instance when the AfS decides to personally visit the restaurant owner, who is distressed by the prospect of the *BIGNIK* blocking his driveway. While eating lunch at the restaurant, the AfS explores the owner's relationship to the restaurant, the history that has shaped it, as well as his broader business approach. In the conversation, the affective memory of losing clients if they cannot access the restaurant by car as well as the owner's insistence on running his business as usual surface as central to his body's geo-historicity. In response to those affective thresholds, the AfS tries to come up with solutions that accommodate those boundaries without undermining the concept and aesthetics of the *BIGNIK*, suggesting not only the slipper station, but also a post-event closing dinner at the restaurant as well as an article in the town's newsletter. Attuning is also drawn upon by the AfS when they visit a farmer to find out whether he would be willing to support the project once more after a difficult year. After the meeting, they tell me that they have offered to go and help make hay for a day and brought a bottle of wine and pasta together with a *BIGNIK* module: "This has smoothed over our differences, now he is open again, but we have to anticipate that it might be too much for him." By offering to help the farmer with what is relevant to him (to make hay) and by acknowledging and validating the trouble he went through to try and support the project, the AfS constitutes the farmer's lifeworld and the boundaries that enact it as a relevant and important other to the project.

Affective body. Attuning as an affective tactic elicits respect and forges trust by allowing the speed and rhythm of different bodies to converge and their affective thresholds to match. Eventually, it creates a double movement. On the one hand, the entrepreneurial process explores and organizes itself by attuning to the affective thresholds of the involved bodies and by accommodating some of the boundaries that enact them. On the other hand, the involved bodies also attune themselves to the affective thresholds of the AfS by accommodating the different boundaries of the project. Although he is not entirely convinced by the slipper station, the restaurant owner eventually allows the *BIGNIK* to cover the streets on his property. The effort made by the AfS to find a fitting solution moves him to accommodate the project from his stance as well. The mayor reflects on her own embodied movement towards the *BIGNIK* by pointing out

that "[a]t some point, you have to put yourself into that world as well because there are those moments when you could say: they [AfS] are completely crazy, right?". This attunement of bodies to each other's thresholds, capacities and speeds not only plays a role in the relationship between central collaborators of the project such as the CDA, the mayor of the town or the local officials, farmers and restaurant owners who need to put their streets and fields at disposal. It also surfaces and shapes the project in the more intimate encounters between bodies and does not only take place between human bodies, but also between human and nonhuman bodies. Attunement also happens when an elderly lady brings a pillow and big sun hat to accommodate the uneven ground and lack of shade resulting from the material capacity of *BIGNIK* in order to be able to participate. Or it happens when I as a volunteer let go of my expectation of a clearly planned and organized process, accommodating to the emergent rhythm and coordination of activities.

The AfS is aware of the need for this shared respect and trusting relationship in the process of collaboration. Patrik notes: "I think you can convince many people only if you like them. When you are in constant conflict with them, then you cannot convince them […]. [I]t takes a certain empathy, it takes love, then it can work." The AfS' strategy to attune to the bodies which it tries to couple to the project is often successful. However, the strategy to situationally attune to the affective thresholds of bodies in order to overcome affective impasses in the entrepreneurial process can also have more ambivalent effects. The restaurant owner who is opposed to shutting the streets to his restaurant and rather reluctant to adapt to the project receives publicity and guests in return for his willingness to accommodate the project. Another restaurant owner who is initially supportive of the project is not validated in such a special way. When his plan to set up a barbecue station outdoors does not work out, he feels treated unfairly and interferes with the blocking of his parking space. The mayor notes:

> Well, the Black Horse which was more opposed to [the BIGNIK] at the end had all the publicity and the Fox had no publicity. If they had been more difficult and said 'no, we don't want that', they would have also gotten a special solution and we probably would not have ended up with this problem.

6.2.4 Opposing: instilling sad passions

Relational maneuver. Attuning as an affective tactic is often paired with another tactic which I frame as 'opposing'. This tactic tries to inhibit other, conflicting common notions by discrediting dominant sociomaterial orders. The experience of 'opposing' shines through in the CDA's description of the AfS' work as 'uncompromising'. Or it surfaces in the curator's view of the artists as the 'guardians' of the *BIGNIK* idea. While attuning as an affective tactic is geared towards exploring and at times accommodating the boundaries which constitute other bodies, thus meeting and connecting with their affective thresholds, opposing as a tactic wants to ensure that the ecology of encounter of the *BIGNIK* and the ecological couplings that are constitutive of it are not disintegrated in the process of attuning to and involving others. It insists on and asserts core features of the *BIGNIK*, while at the same time negating the legitimacy of other demands and expectations. The head of the communication agency that has collaborated with the AfS on several projects evokes this tension between attuning and opposing by referring to his own experience of working with the AfS: "They are always searching and moving, and in certain aspects, you can really think along and influence them, but in others, they are incredibly consistent, you could also call it stubborn, but just very consistent […]." Opposing thus works against eroding those ecological couplings and affective capacities of the project which excite and move bodies towards enacting and sustaining the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of intensity. A member of the CDA reflects this by noting:

> We had to learn that certain things just aren't up for discussion because often it is those core aspects or like the basic idea, this simplicity of the BIGNIK. You are almost destroying it when you start fiddling with that.

When a sewing machine company and a former project partner of the *BIGNIK* inquires whether they could buy some of the *BIGNIK* modules for their own corporate event, the AfS turns down the offer by explaining that they could not afford the modules anyways because they are too costly. In the way that the AfS turns down the offer of the sewing machine company, it reinstates the value of the fabrics around their vibrant capacity and opposes the dominant mode of ordering which articulates fabrics as tradable objects rather than agentic materiality. In a conversation with a curator, the AfS explains this stance:

> We have a responsibility vis-à-vis of those fabrics. They are not ours, they belong to the community, the question of the ownership of this work will surface someday. […] We cannot just rent it out like 'here you go, you can represent your merger [or business] with this blanket'. You can only become a part of the concept by lending a hand yourself.

In a similar manner, the encounter between the AfS and the distraught restaurant owner is organized not only by attuning but also by opposing. Listening to his various suggestions on how to keep the driveway to his restaurant open, the AfS eventually states that for the overall aesthetics of the project, they cannot give up these roads. Again, the materiality has its own agency in this mode of encounter: the fabric modules are unfit for the contact with bare car tires and the way they are joined renders the blanket somewhat solid, making quick and flexible adaptations to the blanket impractical. The slipper station or suggestions to transport guests on stretchers to the restaurants are strategies to accommodate some of the sociomaterial boundaries of the restaurant owner (which suggest that guests will not visit the restaurant if they have to walk there themselves from the parking spot), whilst opposing the dominant mode of ordering which privileges functionality over unfolding the excessive and vibrant capacities of the fabrics in public space.

Affective body. In contrast to attuning, inserting and articulating, which aim at creating joyous affective encounters that increase the capacities of other bodies to couple to the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of intensities, opposing as an affective tactic forms sad affective bodies. The AfS' opposing of the restaurant owner's wish to have his road unblocked, puts him into the affectively unpleasant position of becoming the local spoilsport of the event. Or the AfS opposing the project partner's inquiry to rent some of the *BIGNIK* modules instils a sense of guilt in him for trying to erode the value of an artwork. Whilst the AfS often takes the lead in opposing, opposing as an affective tactic also circulates in the wider network of the project and is enacted by other bodies which have developed a common notion around the project. Instances of opposing surface when residents and participants publicly express their preference for the 'messier' and more occupying *BIGNIK* version in the middle of town or when they articulate their disappointment that the main road was not shut down, opposing the dominant mode of ordering that calls for a pacified materiality and an at all times smoothly running public infrastructure. Or it lingers in the reflection of CDA members that, in hindsight, initial collaborations with retail shops were not really a good fit for the

BIGNIK, thus opposing the dominant mode of ordering which finances such cultural projects through consumption and commodification.

The forming and instilling of sad passions creates obedience by preventing affective bodies from forming common notions and active desires that do not fit with problematizations articulated by the project, and by creating an affective impasse that hinders the bodies to become swept up by dominant modes of ordering (Sage, Vitry & Dainty, 2020). It is often successful as a situational maneuver to prevent bodies from forging unsuitable common notions. At times, however, opposing can trigger a strain in the affective capacities of the involved bodies and their relationships, which keeps reverberating in the relational processes of the project. When in 2011, the AfS pitches 'BIGNIK' as a label for the growing picnic blanket, several members of the steering committee want to change it into a more traditional word and expect the AfS to subordinate to their wish. The AfS opposes this traditional understanding of their role as contractors and is unwilling to change the name. The head of the communication agency who participated in that meeting describes the atmosphere in the aftermath of this conflict as 'ice age climate'. The CDA is able to argue in favour of the project and its name later, yet, the tension around the role and position of the AfS never fully resolves and keeps surfacing in intense and at times violent conflicts with the CDA around the authorship of the project. It haunts the project in a lingering negative sentiment of some members of the steering committee towards the AfS and in their inability to form a shared understanding around the *BIGNIK* as an important regional project and participative process. Eventually, the CDA does not withdraw from the project, but reduces their budget for it substantially: "We decided that we do not want to finance them [the AfS] walking around in the region [collecting fabric]. The assembling of the blanket, that is a strong moment and for this, the committee will allocate a budget." Despite the sustained support of the project, the opposition leaves the bodies of the CDA and the steering committee and their affective capacities tangibly marked. The CDA member who was in charge of the project for the first years notes that because of the affective strains she associates with the project, it was helpful for her when she could sidestep a little bit from the *BIGNIK* as someone else took over the lead.

6.2.5 Affective tactics: an intra-active interplay

The four affective tactics (for an overview see table 7) as relational and situational maneuvers are central in the entrepreneurial process of the *BIGNIK* because they enable the movement of bodies' affective capacities towards (re)coupling with the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of encounter and facilitate the forging of those resonating moments of intensities. As the AfS itself notes: "At the end of the day, we only work through the emotions, through the fascination, through the inspiration, that is all part of this intensity because otherwise we wouldn't be able to do it.

Table 7. Overview of the four affective tactics and how they affect bodies

	opening	articulating	attuning	opposing
relational maneuver	creating new encounters	forging common notions	exploring geo-historicities	inhibiting common notions
reordering strategy	rupturing boundaries	imagining alternative orders	accommodating boundaries	discrediting dominant orders
affective body	passive affect	active desire	matching thresholds	sad passion
affective capacity	+	++	0	-
feelings	wonder, surprise	passion, excitement	trust, respect	frustration, alienation

With Barad (2003, p. 817) we can understand these four affective tactics as intra-actions which enact "a differential sense of being" in the ongoing ebb and flow of agency, moving bodily capacities towards enacting new relations. Opening as an intra-action articulates (human) bodies which are moved by surprise and are enveloped by "a strange combination of delight and disturbance", a sensuous 'enchantment' (J. Bennett, 2010, p. xi, see also: 2001). It emerges when the habitual way of relating is somehow ruptured in those new encounters, as "[t]o be enchanted is to be struck and shaken by the extraordinary that lives amid the familiar and the everyday" (J. Bennett, 2001, p. 4). It articulates an unexpected intra-action between bodies that creates a state of 'interactive fascination'. This state of 'shocked' surprise entails on the one hand a pleasurable feeling of being delighted and charmed and on the other hand a more uncanny feeling of being disrupted and "torn out of one's default sensory-psychic-intellectual disposition" (J. Bennett, 2001, p. 5). It moulds into a sense of amazement

in which the bodies come alive in their vibrant singularities, defying, exceeding or rearticulating the agency assigned to them – temporarily suspending the usual unfolding of time and bodily movement as bodies experience new sociomaterial and affective relations. At the public sewing station, for instance, the intra-action in the process of the sewing rearticulates both the vibrant singularities of the fabric and the immersive capacities of the human body. Articulating as intra-action then builds on this sense of wonder to articulate striving, excited and passionate bodies. It draws upon what Rancière (2007; see also: Quintana, 2019) calls 'literarity', the capacity of enunciations and words to create a form of excess and pass through bodies, altering and diverting them from their destination through instigating new desires, mobilizing other interests and emphasizing different problematizations – thus allowing bodies to disidentify with the roles or positions which are dominantly assigned to them around new common notions. For instance, the term 'accomplices', which the AfS frequently draws upon to addresses residents and participants, invites these bodies to leave behind their everyday roles and interests to become co-creators of this artwork. At the same time, it also articulates a new problematization: the necessity and importance of their complicity with the project.

Attuning, then again, as an intra-action constitutes bodies which are enveloped by a shared sense of what Barad (2007) and Haraway (2012) refer to as 'response-ability', thus a care for and responsiveness towards the shared entanglement of bodies in this lively relationality of becoming. It implies "a solidarity that is not based on proximity and similarity but on being-in-this-together" and affirms bodies as legitimate and important 'others' in the process of co-constitution (Meissner, 2014, p. 40). The different attunements that happen in the *BIGNIK* enact a response-ability towards the fabrics, the farmers, the residents and restaurant owners, caring for their bodily becomings along their complex (and at times involuntary) entanglements in the relationships that constitute the *BIGNIK*. At the same time, attuning also opens up the affective capacities for other affective tactics, such as opening or articulating. In a Spinozian reading, only bodies that experience joyful affects in relation to other bodies can form common notions (Deleuze, 2017, p. 10, see also: 1990, pp. 282–283). The ecological couplings in the *BIGNIK* not only subvert sociomaterial orders, they also hold together disparate things, momentarily stabilizing the BIGNIK as an ecology of intensity and ontological phenomenon. Opposing as an intra-action enables this "holding together" (Barad, 2011, p. 46). It creates 'sad' or 'guilty' bodies by resisting, challenging and disrupting

pleasurable sociomaterial relationships that are not in line with the problematizations articulated by the *BIGNIK*. As an intra-action, it thus constitutes what Ahmed calls a (2017) 'killjoy' subjectivity and resonates with Deleuze's (2017, p. 4) reading of Spinoza that "inspiring sad passions is necessary for the exercise of power". In opposing commercial involvements or a classic contractor role, the AfS becomes a killjoy holding together the sociomaterial relations of the *BIGNIK* as a rhizomatic collective and independent artwork and severing those that would enact it as public service or event. Conversely, when opposing the restaurants owner's need for open streets, his body is constituted as a 'killjoy' who tries to sever the pleasurable sociomaterial ties that constitute the *BIGNIK* as an aesthetic experience and ecology of encounter. As opposing lowers the overall affective capacity of bodies to enact any kind of relationship, this affective tactic is often framed or followed by the others, which try to constitute joyous bodies (again). In most instances, the sad affective capacities created through opposing are contained and modulated within the situation and along the process, creating relationships that overall are forged by increasing affective capacities towards enacting and coupling to the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of intensities. In their interplay, these four affective tactics work against "the destiny of matter, that is to say, against an understanding of self and of the world as a given, resistant, regulated, natural, uniform matter that imposes certain things" (Quintana, 2019, p. 224). By opening 'body-subjects' to other possibilities and unexpected ways "in which [they] can reinvent themselves from the positions, roles, and practices that they are subjected to" (Quintana, 2019, p. 214), the interplay of these four affective tactics (see table 7) enables bodies to embrace and move along the different ecological couplings which constitute the *BIGNIK*.

This differential sense of self, this other 'body-subject' which these affective tactics move bodies towards often responds to a longing in these bodies to re-experience the relationships with themselves and others. The AfS is aware of this longing as a driver of their work and even evokes it in one of their slogans: 'We break in so that others can break out'. A long-term collaborator of the two artists notes critically that there is also something instrumental about the way the *BIGNIK* constitutes different affective bodies. While the AfS is careful to emphasize that they do not want to instrumentalize or take advantage of people for their work, one of the artists points to the ambivalence of their use of affective tactics:

> We can never do justice to what we spark. We interact with other people and create this intimacy and excitement, this inspiration and intensity and then, when we have what we need, we are gone again. We don't have the capacity to maintain all those relationships at this level.

For most participants, the confined and episodic nature of this shift in affective capacities and the sense of wonder, excitement and response-ability it articulates is not a concern. They locate this experience and capacity as a pleasurable one amongst others on the cartography of their own subjectivity. However, some bodies experience disappointment or even anger when the project and processes are not able to consistently articulate this differential sense of self for them. One collaborator points out that it is maybe the most vulnerable bodies, those most in need who have a strong desire for new relations but little affective capacities to access them, who come to experience the fleeting affective promise of the *BIGNIK* as a painful sense of lack.

Furthermore, this constitution of different affective bodies and ecological couplings along those four affective tactics is not embraced by all bodies in the same voluntary manner. The AfS notes: "Through the way that we operate, we inspire others to operate this way and that creates other forces, other effects, where again other people say: please stop now." A member of the CDA admits that they would have given up or toned down the project a long time ago without the insistence of the AfS and points out that "[t]here isn't a little bit of BIGNIK, it is always the full charge", expressing her reluctance to move along the ecology of the *BIGNIK* with this intensity. A critical journalist mirrors a similar sentiment when he reflects his encounter with the invitation to participate at the one of the first *BIGNIK* assembly in a magazine article:

> [The invitation spoke] not just of fabrics, but also of a fever, a delusion of identity and a generational project, that one had to close ranks, pull modules together in concert; the elated sound becoming threatening, almost like a marching order, and everything called BIGNIK.

The AfS emphasizes that the way they entangle people with their concepts in a playful way is voluntary: "It is not like we capture them and they are ensnared forever, it is more like an option." Nevertheless, the affective tactics that keep the CDA engaged also articulate a subtle form of domination, giving the CDA little leeway to quit or change the project. They as much as the AfS are trapped in the artistic vision of the project. Eventually, the attempt at coupling bodies to this different ecology of intensities can also create intrusive affective traces that haunt bodies long after the affective infraction.

Such traumas linger in the relationship between some bodies of the CDA, the steering committee and the AfS. They are also palpable when I try to speak to a critical journalist about the project. In the end, he declines to give an interview, letting me know that he had hoped to leave all of this behind him and does not want to dig it up again. Hence, the affective tactics which are drawn upon in the entrepreneurial process of the *BIGNIK* to move bodies towards coupling to its ecology also create ambivalent ethical entanglements. On the one hand, the tactics and the ecological couplings bodies are moved towards are propelled by increasing the affective capacities of humans and nonhumans and by taking 'response-ability' for their constitutive otherness. On the other hand, the process of moving bodies towards a different ecology of intensities and its goal to (at least temporarily) reorder our relationship and entanglement with humans and nonhumans also articulates its own potential for bodily infractions.

6.3 Affective commons: sustaining a 'structure of feeling'

After having carved out the ecological couplings and affective tactics that forge the *BIGNIK* as an ecology of intensities, I now craft the link between the couplings and tactics into a more general interpretation by inquiring the political capacity of this ecology of intensities. In doing so, I will reread the promises, struggles and ambivalences that envelop the process of entrepreneuring the *BIGNIK* as a different ecology of intensities through the conceptual notion of the 'affective commons'. The notion has been first introduced by Waters-Lynch & Duff (2019) to conceptualize and discuss the tensions that surround the immaterial and autonomous labour which creates and sustains a 'structure of feeling' in co-working spaces as a kind of 'atmospheric product' (Blackman, 2019). It is also foregrounded in a more political and critical elaboration by Singh (2017), who emphasizes commons as sites for affective encounters and co-becomings in her exploration of community forestry initiatives in India. I draw on this notion to emphasize that the ecology of encounter created through the cultural entrepreneurial process of *BIGNIK* articulates a structure of feeling as a collectively produced and shared resource that imbues bodies "with novel capacities, new modes of interaction, new insights, tendencies or habits" (Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019, p. 8) by creating sociomaterial encounters and sociomaterial relations that foster the sensation and subjectivity of 'being in common' with others (Singh, 2017) (image 21). The AfS

often refers to this structure of feeling as the 'BIGNIK spirit' or the 'BIGNIK groove'. Bodies who are directly participating or engaging in this process of producing or 'commoning' this structure of feeling (De Angelis, 2017; Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019) are most strongly moved by it. However, the mere existence and imaginary of such an affective commons and its promise of *vitality*, *presence*, *(be)coming together* and *potentiality*, the way it makes people "feel close to something – something that might be happening" is able to modulate bodies' capacities (Gregg, 2018, p. 89). Indeed, many people pursue the *BIGNIK* online before, after and in between participating in the process, being fascinated by its strange and uncanny imaginary and moved by the project without actually participating in it. A member of the CDA notes:

> It really got to me how many people approached me in the aftermath [of assembling the BIGNIK] […] Everyone is kind of noticing. […] I mean this isn't just our work, so many people are involved in this, but yes, the fact that everyone is really excited about it and like 'next time I have to come, too. It looks really great.' Well, yes, please!



Image 21. The 'BIGNIK' in the streets as a collectively shared affective resource
Credits: Atelier für Sonderaufgaben

By coupling to the *BIGNIK* ecology while sewing or assembling the blanket or by encountering it accidentally, bodies become enveloped by this structure of feeling and get access to the bodily resources created by the affective commons. Participants access different affective capacities when they experience how together with the connection, flow and colourful aesthetics of the fabrics they are able to collectively transform public spaces into something more pleasant, something warmer or when they are able to encounter people in a new way. Often these different affective capacities are confined to bodies' entanglement with the project. At times, however, people are also able to access these capacities beyond the ecology of the *BIGNIK*. Participants note how the project instigates them to be more daring, to think more boldly. A long term-collaborator who is intrigued by the way the AfS pursues their ideas shares how he tries to apply this also to his own profession: "If I have an idea, then I don't immediately think, 'no, this is bullshit, that is just some stupid idea you have'. I just try it out." Being coupled to this ecology and becoming enveloped by this structure of feeling not only gives bodies access to different affective capacities but also to different subjectivities. Farmers, restaurant owners, politicians, policemen, refugees, elderly ladies, students, pedestrians and home-economics teachers suddenly are constituted as accomplices of an artistic vision. By participating in the project, they become more-than-farmer, more-than-student, more-than-grand-mother, more-than-refugee. They operate as contributors, spokespersons and protagonists in a regional artwork and become visible as such on Instagram and Facebook, in video documentations and TV reports. A volunteer voices this experience in relation to an ad spot created for the *BIGNIK*: "I had to jump in. They actually had another actress, but then [the artist] called. I had such stage fright, I couldn't say what I was supposed to, I think like 35 times they had to use the slate and then I was on TV." Moreover, these intensities also envelop and transform the capacities and subjectivities of materialities and places: on 'fabric hunts' dusty attics, old cupboards and cluttered basements, small villages and unassuming suburbs turn into 'fabric mines'; old fashioned curtains and faded tablecloths become exciting resources.

To constitute the *BIGNIK* as an affective commons, the entrepreneurial process around the project continuously needs to move bodies towards this process of 'commoning' this ecology of encounter. This entails instigating bodies to adopt, embrace and move along those ecological couplings which are constitutive of the *BIGNIK* as an affective commons and uphold these couplings along the different commoning activities that produce the

BIGNIK by donating fabrics, sewing or assembling the modules, by providing storage space, allowing streets to be blocked or sharing a meal at the event. Commoning is thus the self-organized process of producing, fostering, caring and consuming these affective capacities and the ecological couplings that enact them through "the coming together of the labor and creative energies of human and more-than-human actors" (Singh, 2017, p. 767). Implicitly, many participants are aware of the kind of engagement that is needed to sustain this project and the collective affective values it creates. A participant who has volunteered to assemble the blanket after having attended several times explains how important it is to her to make a contribution to a project which would not work without the support of many volunteers. At the sewing station, a participant reflects: "The people here are wonderful. Everyone puts their heart and soul into it. Because at work, you are not always this committed, but here where you contribute voluntarily, people are really motivated. That creates a great energy." Another volunteer notes: "That is the beauty of it: Everybody can be part of it – or not." The *BIGNIK* community is thus constantly transforming around the voluntary effort of different people. The self-organized process of commoning the *BIGNIK* and its ability spill over and move bodies even if they are not yet strongly involved in it is central to producing this structure of feeling and its notion of 'being in common'.

However, the openness towards the different ways that people can contribute to and experience the *BIGNIK* as an affective commons also creates tensions around its shared production and use. In a group discussion, a long-term volunteer shares how it gets to her that many people are excited about the project, yet fail to support it:

> So many people tell me how cool they find it and when I then ask them, are you coming, then for some reason they can't. […] Sometimes I stopped asking in my circles because I just didn't want to hear another 'no'. Yes, that really hurt me because I personally invest so much. I mean, I don't want to force anybody.

A long-term participant and volunteer, an elderly woman, talks about what a struggle it can be for her to help assemble the blanket in the heat, noting that at times she has to remind herself that she will only keep doing it as long as it is fun. For both women, the experience of commoning the *BIGNIK* thus is ambivalent at times. Through their ongoing engagement, they get access to the positive capacities created along the affective commons. However, they are also confronted with the social dilemma endemic to commons: the unequal distribution of the labour and valorisation which

is required for its production (De Angelis, 2017; Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019). It instigates them to carefully negotiate their role and commitment in this commoning process so that the affective capacities they get access to are not effaced by the difficult encounters implicated in this process of commoning (the strenuous work, the feeling of disappointment that other people do not support it in the same way).

While the structure of feeling of this affective commons moves through bodies rather than being consumed by them, maintaining its affective intensities requires the ongoing mobilization of human and nonhuman bodies along those three ecological couplings in order to 'recharge' the shared intensities which they create and which consistently threaten to 'evaporate' (Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019). Encouraging these activities and ecological couplings which uphold this structure of feeling through the four affective tactics is thus one of the key challenges in the process of sustaining the *BIGNIK* as an affective commons. The CDA, long-term volunteers and the AfS are aware of this struggle in the entrepreneurial process of the *BIGNIK*, the AfS frequently stating that "the BIGNIK is a service created by the public not a public service". The complexity of sustaining the *BIGNIK* as an 'affective commons' emanates not only from the need to instigate the ongoing voluntary efforts of the bodies that engage in the commoning activities around the BIGNIK. It also emanates from the effort which it takes to move humans and nonhumans along those three ecological couplings which enact the BIGNIK and the different sociomaterial orders which they implicitly articulate in our everyday relationship to materiality, time and collectivity. It implies getting busy people to take some time out of their structured days in order to immerse themselves into the process of sewing. Or it implies moving residents and officials to agree on the temporary blocking of streets to showcase the *BIGNIK*'s excessive materiality, or convincing the steering committee to financially support an ongoing cultural project while foregoing traditional monetary instruments such as event sponsoring. The mayor of one of the towns which host the *BIGNIK* points to the strain this can put on her team to support and help organize cultural projects such as the *BIGNIK* whose needs and ideas do not fit neatly into the everyday order of things:

> [I]t is always extraordinary stuff that we have never had before, stuff that creates problems, where you have to think, if I say yes to this, what are the consequences of that. […] [T]hat is harder than just simply saying: that's how we usually do it and that's what it will be like. You know, all orderly. […] And that also makes you tired.

Sustaining the *BIGNIK* as an affective commons thus can also be a source of frustration and diminishing affective capacities, creating a sense of fatigue and declining enthusiasm for the process of commoning (Singh, 2017) as it entails the struggle and affective energy of getting bodies to enact and move along relationships which in themselves are not self-evident and potentially also produce frictions.

Moreover, the different ways in which bodies are involved in and contribute to this process of commoning the *BIGNIK* also shapes how their affective capacities are inflected by this process of commoning. The AfS, whose main task is to convince other people of the project's creative vision, who works very closely with the *BIGNIK* community and who has the lead in making the key creative decisions, is continuously reenergized by the process and the different encounters it entails. The CDA, on the other hand, who is more focused on the administrative tasks in the background of the project, has less opportunities to move along the ecological couplings that sustain the ecology's structure of feeling. In a moderated strategy meeting, members of the CDA admit that the energy from their side was missing in the past years. Some even call the project 'a burden' and point to the importance of working on a better and more equal partnership between the CDA and the AfS. The intensities which articulate the *BIGNIK* as an affective commons are thus not accessible and sustainable equally in all commoning activities of the project. Collaborators of the project point out that the affective spark created by the project's overall concept which initially excited the CDA and other collaborators is not enough to sustain its structure of feelings and the organizational process that creates it over such a long temporal arch:

> "[I]t is not possible anymore to create the same kind of euphoria when the goal of the vision is that far away, it doesn't mean that you have to change the vision, but maybe [you need different mechanisms] to revitalize it.

When the AfS eventually decides to develop the assembly in the streets as a future model of the *BIGNIK*, it is responsive to the shared struggle and commitment of the bodies that help to sustain the project: the volunteers, participants and the CDA, and the collective need to find a way to make it happen more easily and reduce the frustration potential inherent to sustaining the *BIGNIK* as affective commons along its different ecological couplings. After the first assembly in the streets, initially meant as a plan B in case of unstable weather conditions, a member of the CDA tells how excited she was about showing the blanket in a new environment: "Today I felt energized again, it was not just grudging and arduous." Ultimately, the process of entrepreneuring

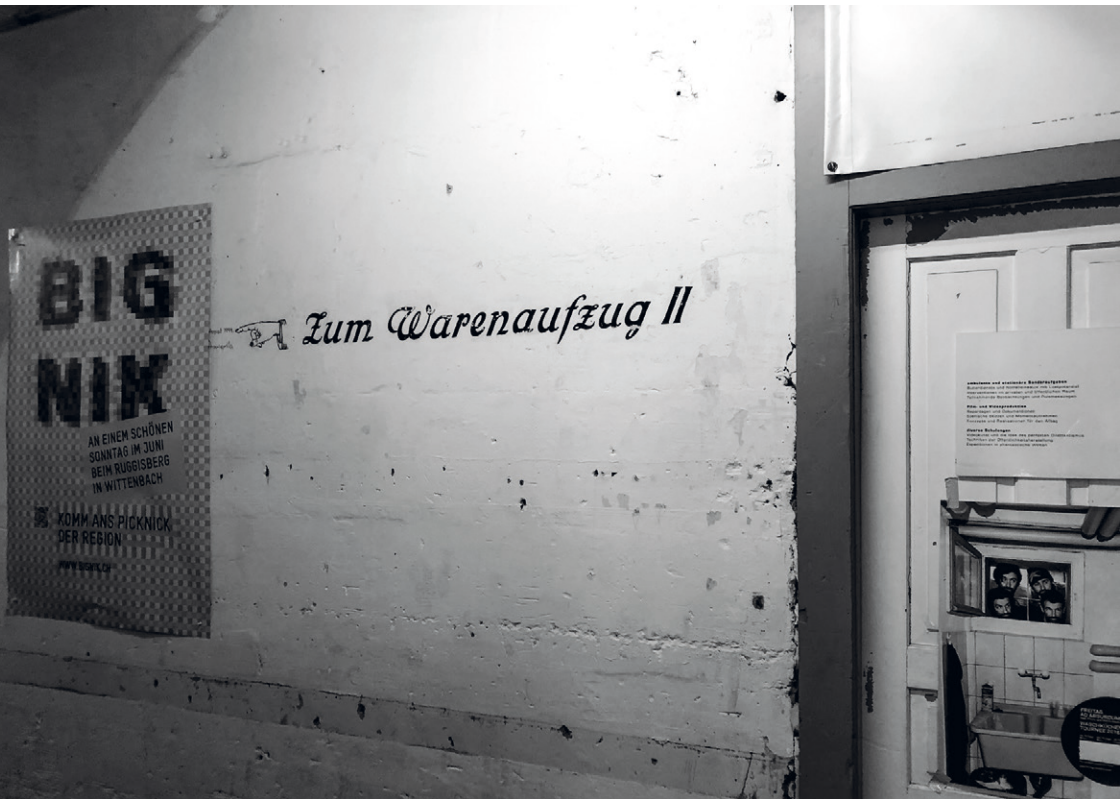
such an affective commons thus not only needs to continuously couple bodies to its ecology of intensities, but must also find (new) ways in sustaining a distributive flow of positive capacities to those bodies that are central for its ongoing production. It points to the ethico-political capacities of cultural entrepreneurship to create different collectively shared and nurtured affective relations. At the same time, it also hints at the ambiguous politics of commoning that play out in this entrepreneurial process of creating and distributing affective resources. Both of those I will consider in more detail in the chapter that follows.


Was inspiriert mich?


SONY
RENAISSANCE



I instantly notice the excitement and joy of the farmer slash butler. In the broadest Appenzeller dialect he explains how taken he is by the zero star hotel and how much he is going to miss it. 'It is really shitty that it is gone soon.' Patrik smirks at the metaphor: 'But it is shit that something new can sprout from.'



7 New perspectives on the processes and politics of cultural entrepreneurship

Through my analysis in chapter 5, I unfolded how the entrepreneurial process of the AfS and the *zero star hotel* move along an experimental system that organizes itself around a vague epistemic thing. I showed how in the process they articulate new regional ontologies and reconfigure human-nonhuman entanglements by playing with sociomaterial boundaries, navigating bodily connections and by moving in speculative processes. My analysis in chapter 6 then carved out how the *BIGNIK* project articulates a different ecology of intensities by coupling bodies to agentic materiality, rhythmic time and rhizomatic collectivity. I argued that it produces an affective commons that is continuously sustained in the entrepreneurial process along the interplay of *opening*, *articulating*, *attuning* and *opposing* as affective tactics. After having presenced these analyses, I will now discuss in more detail how these results and the vital material perspective on which they build, as onto-epistemological traces, contribute to and expand our current understanding and conceptualization of (cultural) entrepreneurial processes and politics in the CCI. In section 7.1, I will first look more closely at how the model of entrepreneurial experimentation and the interplay of affective tactics articulate a new understanding of the processual and relational dynamics that allow cultural entrepreneurship to innovate and transform art worlds and society. In section 7.2, I go on to discuss on a more conceptual level how a vital materialist perspective re-matters the politics of cultural entrepreneurship by pointing to its 'onto-political' and 'ethico-politcal' dimension, and by illuminating its ambiguous capacities of 'commoning'.

7.1 Thinking (cultural) innovation through sociomaterial relations and affective capacities

As I have discussed in chapter 2, cultural entrepreneurial processes are shaped considerably by the different collaborative networks in which they are embedded, and which constitute contemporary art worlds and their margins. Current literature highlights the tension in cultural entrepreneurial processes between pursuing distinct and novel creative visions and the pressure to conform to the norms and

implicit boundaries that define a certain art field in order to access resources along those collaborative networks. I have also emphasized that current literature draws predominantly on institutional, interpretative and Bourdieuan frameworks to understand how cultural entrepreneurial processes navigate this tension. I have suggested that a vital material perspective might provide a relevant new angle for understanding these processes. In section 7.1.1, I will first discuss how the vital material model of entrepreneurial experimentation contributes to our current understanding of 'organizational ingenuity' and 'institutional agency' by proposing a processual, distributed, relational understanding of agency. Furthermore, it carves out the importance of bodily and affective connections for navigating the tension between agency and constraint in which cultural entrepreneurship, in its emancipatory strive, is often caught up. In section 7.1.2, I will look more closely at the relational work that moulds these collaborative processes. I will discuss how the interplay of four affective tactics articulates a more dynamic, situational and visceral perspective on the 'institutional work' that cultural entrepreneurs engage in, while also pointing towards the subtle and embodied power dynamics that are navigated in these relational processes.

7.1.1 Navigating agency and constraint through experimentation

Although entrepreneurial processes are frequently considered as working with and through 'experimentation', there is a distinct lack of research in entrepreneurship studies that unfolds and conceptualizes this process of entrepreneurial experimentation. Moreover, if experimentation does surface in entrepreneurship literature, it is usually framed as a productive strategy to deal with uncertainty (Lindholm-Dahlstrand, Andersson, & Carlsson, 2018; Sabato, Vanhercke, & Verschraegen, 2017) or as a mode of entrepreneurial solution finding (Ahuja & Lampert, 2001; Shah & Tripsas, 2007), respectively. The vital materialist model of experimentation that I develop in chapter 5 around Rheinberger's notion of the 'experimental system' opens both the scope of entrepreneurial experimentation and its effects beyond such instrumental understandings. Through the lens of Rheinberger and other vital materialist scholars, I conceptualize entrepreneurial experimentation as a process that continuously navigates and negotiates agency and constraint in an attempt to generate and at

the same time disrupt reality. It does this along an ever-changing and rather fragile experimental system that is organized around a vague sense of and emancipatory desire for this other (cultural) life to come.

Such a framework of experimentation therefore suggests a processual and at the same time also a material and embodied framework for what some organizational scholars call 'institutional entrepreneurship' or 'organizational ingenuity', thus the ability of cultural entrepreneurs "to create innovative solutions within structural constraints using limited resources and imaginative problem solving" (Lampel, Honig, & Drori, 2014, p. 467). In recent years, both in organization studies and in research on the CCI, such entrepreneurial attempts at institutional innovation have gained increasing attention (Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007). They have been discussed, for instance, in connection with the notions of 'mavericks' (Candaces Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen & Townley, 2016), 'amphibious entrepreneurs' (Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016; Powell & Sandholtz, 2012) or 'rebels' (Candace Jones, Maoret, Massa & Svejenova, 2012; Välikangas & Carlsen, 2020). Research has explored and theorized the process of creating and leveraging such institutional agency by looking, for instance, at how actors respond to ambiguities (Bridwell-Mitchell, 2016), resolve contradictions (Smets, Jarzabkowski, Burke, & Spee, 2014) or explore alternative social purposes through forms of social inquiry (Nilsson, 2014). This research tends to conceptualize both agency and constraint on the social and symbolic level, for instance through the building and transgressing of categorial boundaries (Rao, Monin & Durand, 2005), and usually locates agency in the interaction of (human) actors. In contrast, the new materialist model of entrepreneurial experimentation which I propose situates agency and constraint on the level of human-nonhuman entanglements and the intra-active capacities and sociomaterial orders which they enact.

Hence, the vital materialist model of entrepreneurial experimentation contributes to this emerging understanding of 'institutional agency' (Välikangas & Carlsen, 2020) on several levels. For one, it theorizes it as open-ended and fragile process by showing that crafting institutional agency for both the art enterprise as a whole as well as its different entrepreneurial projects is less about a singular 'discovery' or 'construction' of a fitting resource configuration. Rather it is conceptualized as an ongoing speculative process of strobing and exploring the capacities and agencies that can unfold by linking different resources 'at hand', for instance the aesthetic capacities of the twin-

body or the affective capacities of vintage hotel beds or idle fabrics (Baker & Nelson, 2005; de Klerk, 2015). It underpins that the playing with, transgressing and negotiating of 'organizational boundaries' (Lampel, Honig & Drori, 2014) in the process of entrepreneurial experimentation is not just a socio-symbolic, but also a sociomaterial process, whereby cultural entrepreneurship creates different 'agentic cuts' and human-nonhuman entanglements in the process of forging hybrid sociomaterial assemblages that intertwine the sociomaterial world of art and hospitality, art and regional development or more generally art and business. Moreover, it emphasises how agency as a surging momentum in an experimental system is propelled not primarily by human intentions, but rather by the propensities and resistances of certain humans and nonhumans (objects, spaces, practices, narratives, bodies) to connect and resonate with other humans and nonhumans as the artists continuously bricolage their fragile entrepreneurial configuration around the attraction and repulsion of its various elements (Välikangas & Carlsen, 2020). In the case of the *zero star hotel*, for instance, the process is propelled by the resistance of the bunker walls as much as the propensities of the 'zero star' or the modern butler as resonating and yet contrasting notions. Though maybe a bit less accentuated, the *BIGNIK* project as an experimental system also evolves around such resonances and constraints, moving for instance into the streets in response to the resistance of the weather and the decreasing affective capacity of the commoners. This relational forging of agency seems to be particularly important in the CCI. Here the malleable relationships which cultural entrepreneurs cultivate with sociomateriality and around which they 'tinker' their entrepreneurial trajectory are a key pillar in their ability to connect different actors in the collaborative networks of such art worlds to their process (Barinaga, 2017). This is the case, for example, when the artists find ways to articulate a business model around the *zero star hotel* whilst protecting its artistic core by hosting the spin-off under a new label. It allows them to make those creative tensions 'conversant' which inevitably arise in the process of assembling heterogeneous elements with diverse interests at the intersection of art and business (Austin, Hjorth, & Hessel, 2018).

Moreover, the vital materialist model of experimentation also highlights the importance of the embodied and affective connection to sociomateriality for shaping and creating agency in these fragile cultural entrepreneurial configurations. Research is already pointing to the embodied way in which creative work crafts sociomaterial relations in the CCI. Gherardi & Perotta (2014), for instance, coin the notion of 'formativeness' to

frame how knowing and doing become entangled in the embodiment of craft work, whilst Bell & Vachhani (2020) underline the encounter with 'vital materiality' as a central force in shaping craft work. Indeed, we can find traces of both formativeness and vibrant materiality as important forces shaping the experimental system of the artistic enterprise, for instance as part of the embodied connection that shapes both the doing and understanding of the entrepreneurial process, or as a driver of the affective relation with the entrepreneurial assemblage. The vital materialist model of experimentation that I propose builds on and expands these perspectives by integrating them into a processual understanding of the cultural entrepreneurial process and its navigation of agency and constraint. For one, it emphasizes how affective encounters with vibrant materiality not only shape the cultural entrepreneurial process, but also allow it to sustain in the face of resistances by keeping entrepreneurs, collaborators and partners affectively engaged with the speculative entrepreneurial process. Moreover, it shows how the intimate embodied relationship and attunement of cultural entrepreneurs to the sociomateriality of their entrepreneurial assemblages not only guides micro-level decisions on how to craft aesthetic relations, but also instructs the shaping of the cultural entrepreneurial process in broader terms. Research in the field of the CCI has often pointed towards the conflicting influences that mesh in creative work such as art and technology or economic and aesthetic influences and wondered how creative firms and cultural entrepreneurs 'cope' with these tensions (Austin, Hjorth & Hessel, 2018). Some authors emphasize the need and difficulty to resolve these tensions, arguing for instance that the economic inevitably colonizes the aesthetic (Eikhof & Haunschild, 2007). Or they show how creative workers address the identity tensions between 'artistry' and a more 'business-like-identity' by segregating roles in time and space. However, I suggest that the vital material model of cultural entrepreneurial experimentation is more in tune with the work of Harvey (2014) and Austin, Hjorth and Hessel (2018) or work on 'amphibious entrepreneurship' (Patriotta & Hirsch, 2016), which emphasizes that making these tensions productive rather than trying to resolve them is often a pathway to (radical) creative innovation. Although the artists in my case first tried to differentiate between the art and business aspect of their work, both their artistic and entrepreneurial position started to become more resonant and impactful when they allowed this tension to come into an ongoing conversation in their work. I would argue that this 'extimacy', i.e. this intricate embodied relationship of experimenters with their experimental assemblage, continuously instructs cultural entrepreneurs in

how they can form and keep these tensions and ambiguities in productive 'ensembles' (Austin, Hjorth & Hessel, 2018). It enables them to sense and move the entrepreneurial configuration along the surprising capacities and openings that surface through these fragile configurations while staying attuned to the 'anomaly' that propels their entrepreneurial trajectory (Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus, 1997), for instance when the artists embrace new business opportunities whilst staying connected to their uncanny capacity for uncompromising art outside of the art field. Or it helps them sustain some degree of 'coherence' or 'authenticity' in the cultural entrepreneurial process through 'repetition' and 'style' when they, for instance, continuously reuse and reconfigure the materiality of the neckties in their work (Austin, Hjorth & Hessel, 2018; Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus, 1997; Svejenova, Pedersen, & Vives, 2011). Further research could explore in more depth how cultural entrepreneurs cultivate and work with this 'extimacy' as they attempt to keep these tensions productive. Eventually, the vital material model of entrepreneurial experimentation emphasizes that it is this holding together of different sociomaterial orders in the process of entrepreneurial experimentation that opens up new micro-potentialities and regional ontologies. It allows experimental systems to enact what Välikangas and Carlsen (2020) call 'minor rebellion' by performing 'minor world-making', 'minor creating' and 'minor inquiring'. After all, it is the ability of the artistic enterprise to create different sociomaterial spaces that attract others; to construct terms, concepts and technologies that challenge dominant sociomaterial orders and to problematize purposes, concepts and practices within an institutional field that transforms their cultural entrepreneurial processes into a 'machines for making the future' (Rheinberger, 2011).

7.1.2 Breaching boundaries through affective tactics

While the importance of affect as a relational capacity already surfaces in my analysis of entrepreneurial experimentation in the *zero star hotel* project in chapter 5, the analysis of the *BIGNIK* project in chapter 6 emphasizes the centrality of affect in the relational labour of entrepreneurs. It thus connects to and expands on current research in the field of the CCI that underlines the importance of such relational work in the process of aesthetic innovation, as it supports cultural entrepreneurs in creating novelty whilst staying intelligible within the field conventions of their collaborative communities (Alacovska, 2018; Granger & Hamilton, 2010; Hoedemaekers, 2018; Candace Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen & Townley, 2016). In their network analyses, both

Daskalaki (2010) and Montanari, Scapolan & Gianecchini (2016) emphasize that in the trajectory of creative collaborations and artistic innovations, this tension between novelty and intelligibility is navigated through the interplay of two different relational modes: 'affective bonding' (strong ties) and 'anti-conformist bridging' (weak ties). Montanari, Scapolan & Gianecchini (2016) coagulate this interplay into four types of relational strategies: 'broadening', 'bonding', 'embedding' and 'disembedding'. According to them, artists draw upon those for relational strategies to benefit from the different resources offered by the two types of relational ties in different stages of their innovation trajectory. Bonding refers to intensifying relationships with existing collaborators while broadening refers to forging relationships with new organizations. Embedding refers to increasing the multiplexity of relations to a collaborator, for instance by collaborating with them on several aspects of the project, while dis-embedding refers to reducing this multiplexity in the relationship with a collaborator. Together, they enable artists to innovate and act against existing social structures and conventions over time. Looking at the broader entrepreneurial trajectory of the AfS, we can see some of these modes of relating at play as the AfS 'broadens' its relations to other organizations while it is 'dis-embedding' its connection to players from the traditional art world.

It should be noted that although the relational model of Montanari, Scapolan & Gianecchini gives answers to the 'what' and 'how' of this relational work from the perspective of the cultural entrepreneur, it does not take into consideration the agency, interests and resistance from the side of the collaborators and how this might affect this relational work. However, zooming in onto the relational processes at play in the *BIGNIK* project shows us that another, more situated form of relational work seems to be equally important in shaping these complex collaborative networks towards artistic innovations. Koch, Wenzel, Senf & Maibier (2018) take a more dialogical route to conceptualizing this relational work. They carve out four 'entre-relating' activities which are drawn upon by an haute-cuisine restaurant to negotiate the tension between the organization and its environment. By 'surprising', 'satisfying', 'stimulating' and 'savouring', the restaurant forges at the same time the aesthetic output as well as the public response to this aesthetic output. Their work emphasizes that relational work is not only about creating different types of connections and accessing different resources, but also about fostering certain perceptions and reactions to the intended work in order to transgress and transform the situated boundaries and conventions

of existing communities (Daskalaki, 2010). The model of 'affective tactics' which I propose in chapter 6 contributes a more in-depth understanding of the dynamics of this 'entre-relating' by conceptualizing and emphasizing the affective quality of this process of boundary transgression and transformation, as I will discuss in the following paragraphs.

As I have already elaborated in section 2.3, research has focused predominantly on the symbolic dimension of such 'boundary work' – until recently. Svejenova, Pedersen & Vives (2011), for instance, work out rhetoric strategies that bridge different institutional logics as an important device which is deployed by cultural entrepreneurs to deal with opposition and convince audiences, interest groups and protagonists from the art world. Lately however, MOS scholars have started to acknowledge and tune more into the role of affect in shaping these ties to other collaborators and creating legitimacy within communities. In entrepreneurship studies 'emotional energy', 'modes of affections' and entrepreneurial 'passions' are starting to establish themselves as important capacities for moulding entrepreneurial relations, contexts and communities (Goss, Jones, Betta & Latham, 2011; Hjorth, 2013; Rindova, Barry & Ketchen, 2009). In innovation studies Sage, Vitry & Dainty (2020) conceptualize an affective ANT to trace the role of affective capacities in the proliferation of technology. Or in field of institutional theory, Välikangas & Carlsen (2020, p. 554) conceptualize institutional agency as something emerging with a collective desire, rather than preceding it. They wonder: "How is such desire produced?" Finally, also the rhetoric strategies emphasized by Svejenova, Pederson & Vives point to such affective processes. After all, the art entrepreneurs Christo and Jeanne Claude, on which they centre their study, emphasize that "[i]t is our work to convince [other people] that they will enjoy [the work], and even if they don't to allow us just for 14 days to create that work of art" (Svejenova, Pedersen & Vives, 2011, p. 508).

The four affective tactics: *opening*, *articulating*, *attuning* and *opposing* and their interplay which I mapped out in section 6.2, can be read as an affective and at the same time sociomaterial reconceptualization of the rhetoric strategies highlighted by Svejenova, Pedersen & Vives. They reframe "the institutional work that accompanies [cultural] entrepreneuring activities" (Rindova, Barry & Ketchen, 2009, p. 487; see also: Garud & Van de Ven, 1992) as an affective process by offering a more molecular understanding of how such a desire for novelty is collectively produced and sustained and how it enacts

and shifts relational boundaries not just on a symbolic but also on a sociomaterial level. For one, the affective tactics emphasize that momentum for the enactment of novelty is generated, sustained and legitimised in such collaborative processes through the creation and proliferation of joyous encounters with new sociomaterial configurations as well as through the articulation of a shared understanding of the relevant affective capacity of this new configuration. Moreover, it points to the important role that different materialities (objects, bodies, practices, tone of voice, metaphors, images, sketches) play in creating such joyous encounters and in inviting bodies to imagine other sociomaterial orders. The visualizations of the potential *BIGNIK* blanket or the metaphorical language which the AfS uses at information events are therefore not merely rhetoric devices to bridge different institutional logics, but also affective devices geared towards constituting wonderous and excited bodies. Similarly, the process of experimentation in the *zero star hotel* also draws upon the affective capacities of the notion of 'zero real estate' or the image of a bed in the middle of the mountains to create and uphold the affective engagement of different elements in its experimental system. Then again, the affective tactics of *attuning* and *opposing* also point to how this relational work engages with the presence of dominant conventions by attuning to the boundaries and by opposing the expectation which they articulate at times. It is this double movement of affectively opening and committing collaborators to the new, whilst both accommodating and discrediting the existing, that allows cultural entrepreneurs to innovate and shift boundaries within a field without losing credibility or tarnishing their reputation within their communities (Svejenova, Mazza & Planellas, 2007). For instance, it enables the art enterprise to accommodate and at the same time move the boundaries of the upset restaurant owner with the 'slipper station' without compromising their artistic integrity. Eventually, it highlights that in order to innovate in the field of the CCI, relational work is not only a question of 'strategy' that allows entrepreneurs to move from inclusion in a field towards creative freedom and independence (Montanari, Scaplolan & Gianecchini, 2016), but also one of affective tactics (Hjorth, 2004). These tactics support entrepreneurial processes in collectively, situationally and relationally channelling diverse interests and agencies and in navigating resistances, in order to shift the collective affective capacities towards the process of creative innovation.

Moreover, the Deleuzo-Spinozian inspired model of affective tactics that I carve out also highlights the important yet subtle role that power plays in shaping these collaborative

processes. Although organization theory acknowledges tensions and power struggles as part of everyday collaborative processes, research in the CCI often emphasizes the 'organic' and 'grassroots organization' of this collaborative work (Comunian, 2017) and implicitly presumes the consensual nature of such collaborations. Critical research exploring the power relations and dynamics of these 'informal, free-wheeling' modes of aesthetic production and innovation are still scarce (A. D. Brown, Kornberger, Clegg, & Carter, 2010; Contu, 2014). Notable exceptions are, for instance, the exploration of the 'invisible walls' and 'silent hierarchies' that shape the creative processes in an architectural firm by Brown, Kornberger, Clegg & Carter (2010) or Contu's (2014) work on the power dynamics in and between communities of practice in design work. Building her analysis on the work practices of a digital media agency, she highlights power as a practical and relational accomplishment that produces boundaries and differences in the legitimacy of actions, status claims and professional identities along the porous process of creative collaboration. Power struggles in practices according to her point to the "political process played at boundaries that is reproduced and reproduces a specific social fabric, a working order" (Contu, 2014, p. 290). After all, as she notes, in practices as 'site ontologies', micro-political power struggles are entangled with macro-institutional structures. This is also visible in tensions that surface within the *BIGNIK* project, where the struggles around the role of the artists and the art project in the collaborations with the CDA mirror, negotiate and enact the broader institutional logics that structure public sector-art collaborations and the position that artists are expected to assume within them. Finally, Contu also points to the importance of affective attachments or intensities such as passion to smooth over discontinuities and maintain continuities within certain work practices despite tensions and power struggles.

The model of affective tactics that I suggest resonates with and contributes to this emerging stream of literature on power dynamics in collaborative creative work by further elaborating on how in such processes sociomaterial orders and boundaries are negotiated affectively. It suggests that affective tactics shape these power struggles by modulating the affective capacities and relations of different bodies to the collaborative project and its sociomaterial relations. In the case of the *BIGNIK* project, for instance, the entrepreneurial process continuously tries to modulate the affective capacities of residents, local authorities, volunteers, participants and partners towards enabling the process around the modular growing blanket while leaving

room for diverging understandings and interpretations of the project. Affective ties rather than consensus are thus what propels these organic and informal modes of organizing. At the end of the day, it is the ability of cultural entrepreneurial processes to create affective capacities for "a differential sense of being" (Barad, 2003, p. 817) that allows them to unfold an emancipatory potential and challenge current social orders. It instigates fabrics, refugees, country women and villages or in the case of the *zero star hotel* bunkers and farmers to become more and other than what they already are. Although these affective ties are predominantly organized around increasing the affective capacities of bodies, they are also held together by situationally decreasing affective capacities of bodies vis-à-vis old problematizations that are not in line with the collaborative process and the new sociomaterial relations it is working towards. The affective process of emancipating bodies from dominant sociomaterial orders thus also produces and is driven by subtle, bodily modes of domination that for instance affectively tie the CDA to the ongoing collective process around the *BIGNIK* and push the restaurant owner to subject himself to the project. It can open up bodies towards new encounters and experiences, but potentially also produces bodily infractions and affective traumas in collaborators, participants and audiences that resist these cultural entrepreneurial attempts at articulating a different social imaginary. In the case of the *BIGNIK*, for instance, such bodily infractions are traceable in both the memories of a member of the CDA and the response of a critical journalist.

7.2 Re-mattering the politics of cultural entrepreneurship

As I have already outlined in chapter 2, from the side of both academic scholars as well as practitioners, cultural entrepreneurship has been imbued with emancipatory hopes and aspirations. At the same time, critical scholars have also emphasized how cultural entrepreneurship is frequently implicated in contemporary neoliberal politics and power structures and the inequalities which are reproduced and co-produced through them. In the introduction and literature review, I have suggested that a vital materialist lens might offer a new perspective on the ambivalent politics of cultural entrepreneurship which seem to oscillate between both emancipation and oppression. In the following two sections I want to discuss and look at the implication of the results of my two analyses from a critical political perspective. I will discuss the results

from both chapter 5 and chapter 6 by focusing on how the process of entrepreneurial experimentation re-matters reality and reconfigures the systems of 'self-others-things' that organizes our everyday lives and how it is able to articulate a different ecology of encounters that as an 'affective commons' produces different collectively shared and fostered affective relations. In section 7.2.1, I emphasize that a vital materialist lens allows us to disentangle the political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship from the dominant neoliberal and emancipatory narrative by pointing towards both its 'onto-political' (chapter 5) and its 'ethico-political' (chapter 6) capacity. In section 7.2.2, I then tune into the results of chapter 6 in more depth by discussing how my analysis of 'affective commoning' allows us to revisit the ambiguous politics of commoning in cultural entrepreneurship.

7.2.1 The onto- and ethico-politics of cultural entrepreneurship

The debates and tensions around the critical political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship outlined in chapter 2 are underpinned by two main narratives along which cultural entrepreneurship has been considered political in contemporary public and academic debates. First, there is a pervasive neoliberal narrative that frames cultural entrepreneurship as political by calling it a vital force in making Western and other economies thrive. This narrative shapes the policy efforts of government bodies all over Europe in fostering cultural entrepreneurship as a central driver of aesthetic capitalism, regional development and the digital economy (Essig, 2017; Go & Lemmetyinen, 2015; Henry & Bruin, 2011; Innerhofer, Pechlaner & Borin, 2018; Oakley, 2006). Certainly, this narrative is not confined to the realm of cultural entrepreneurship but stems from the field of entrepreneurship in general and can be traced back to Schumpeter's (1947, 2016) writings, which place entrepreneurship at the centre stage of economic growth. However, it has become particularly powerful in the last two decades, fuelling public policy to support new (cultural) ventures all over Europe and the US (Hart, 2003; Smallbone, 2010) by suggesting tax reforms or recommending initiatives to foster incubators and other start-up ecosystems for cultural ventures, and by introducing entrepreneurial education within art schools (Beckman, 2007; Bridgstock, 2013; Essig, 2017; Henry & Bruin, 2011). Also in non-Western contexts, this narrative shapes the way prosperity in the CCI and the economy more broadly is thought of and brought about, and pushes the proliferation of cultural entrepreneurial subjectivities (Beltrán & Miguel, 2014; Keane & Chen, 2019; Lazzeretti

& Vecco, 2018). While the neoliberal narrative continues to instruct public policy, driving much of the academic interest in and funding of cultural entrepreneurship research, it has also drawn criticism. Scholars from different academic fields have questioned and challenged the economic imperative and enthusiasm underpinning mainstream cultural entrepreneurship research, pointing out how it is also a key force in perpetuating various social inequalities and causing environmental issues (Oakley, 2006; Ratiu, 2013; Skrede, 2016; Tams, 2002). One of the key features shared by many of these critiques is that framing cultural and other forms of entrepreneurship "solely as a desirable economic activity ignores the many different dimensions of entrepreneurship and in particular the many negative effects related to entrepreneurship" (Verduijn, Essers, Dey & Tedmanson, 2014, p. 99).

In parallel with this neoliberal narrative, a more emancipatory narrative of cultural entrepreneurship has also surfaced. It politicizes cultural entrepreneurship in a different way by celebrating it as a vehicle for social change and community. Different notions have been coined to frame this alternative understanding of cultural entrepreneurship, such as 'sustainable' (Shepherd & Patzelt, 2011), 'value-led' (Tennant, 2015), 'transformative' (Tobias, Mair, & Barbosa-Leiker, 2013), and 'public' (Hjorth, 2013) or 'activist' entrepreneurship (Dey & Mason 2018). It plays into the broader notion of social entrepreneurship and the social enterprise as a grand narrative (Dey & Steyaert, 2010) that has emerged to promote the idea that cultural entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship in general can address social problems, from supporting the reduction of CO_2 emissions to providing basic goods to impoverished milieus; from fostering solidarity to integrating marginalized people in Western urban contexts in a market-oriented way. Cultural entrepreneurship, in this narrative, is deemed political as it proposes a new instrument to address questions of inequality and sustainability, empowering people and communities (Barinaga, 2017; Oakley, 2014; Petrova, 2018). It spills over into various policy-making efforts with many institutions investing in and supporting new types of cultural start-ups and their projects to make better societies. Or it amplifies in a growing offer of art degrees that focus on social design and transdisciplinary arts practices (Win, 2014). Critical voices, however, point out that dominant understandings and practices of such an emancipatory practice of cultural entrepreneurship go along with self-exploitation, precarity and under-examined social and political effects often overlooked and silenced in the heroic portrait of cultural social enterprises (Barinaga, 2017; Dey & Steyaert, 2012; Samdanis & Lee, 2019).

The neoliberal narrative which still dominates the literature on and public debates about cultural entrepreneurship actually does not understand its own framing of entrepreneurship as a form of politics. Instead, it conceptualizes entrepreneurship based on a neo-positivistic knowledge process that leads into instrumental policy instructions on how to back up growth, wealth creation and employment (Weiskopf & Steyaert, 2009). Even if the propagators might claim this narrative to be apolitical, it follows a specific, economic sense of the political that installs an unquestioned belief in growth and material resuscitation (Farias, Fernandez, Hjorth & Holt, 2019). The emancipatory narrative, criticizing the economic bias of the neoliberal narrative, articulates a form of normative responsibility for cultural entrepreneurship beyond the economic sphere and puts forward an entrepreneurial politics in which entrepreneurship transforms society by addressing social and environmental challenges. While it is the merit of the emancipatory narrative to inscribe cultural entrepreneurship in relation to societal transformation (Daskalaki, Hjorth, & Mair, 2015), it also draws an artificial distinction between different forms of cultural entrepreneurship (social, ecological, activist, neoliberal etc.), as if cultural entrepreneurship ever had no social – if even asocial – or other effects whatsoever. A new materialist perspective goes beyond this 'light' form of emancipation (Rindova, Barry & Ketchen, 2009) by emphasizing cultural entrepreneurship's reality disrupting and creating capacities. It underlines that the way cultural entrepreneurship entangles humans and nonhumans and (re) assembles sociomaterial relationships matters and re-matters reality and emphasizes the fragile, fabricated and negotiated nature of sociomaterial worlds. It therefore points to what I propose as the 'onto-political' dimension of cultural entrepreneurship (Barad, 2003; Dale & Latham, 2015; Mol, 1999). Ontological politics, a notion coined by the STS scholar Mol (1999, p. 74), "is interested in the way the 'real' is implicated in the 'political'". Instead of assuming that reality in its ontological dimension is stable, given and universal, onto-politics adopts the idea that the real is local, multiple and enacted in practices as well as in the web of relationships between different actants (Bauer, 2012). The 'political' in onto-politics highlights that this process of shaping and enacting reality has an open and contested character. It is constantly negotiated, actualizing certain interests while silencing others. As this process is the result of a particular set of power-relations, reality could always be organized differently.

From an onto-political perspective, cultural entrepreneurial projects are not political because they promote economic or social welfare, but because they reorganize life in its

ontological dimension. The way in which cultural entrepreneurial projects generate and disrupt life is political because they put forward new realities and regional ontologies that need to be shaped and negotiated against other co-existing realities. They need to be defended, stabilized, spread and translated with considerable effort and skill in order to unfold their onto-political force. Ultimately, cultural entrepreneurial projects are onto-political in the way they reconfigure what Merleau-Ponty (1962) has called a certain systems of 'self-others-things', i.e. the systems according to which in everyday life, our bodies and subjectivities and relationships to other humans and nonhumans are becoming and appearing meaningful (see also: Knorr-Cetina, 1992). This notion of onto-politics shares many affinities with how both Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus (1997) and Sarasvathy (2012) have framed reality as something generative which is not ready-made for entrepreneurs to be merely exploited, but rather 'disclosed' and 'moulded'. Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus (1997), building on a phenomenological tradition, were pioneers in articulating the idea that entrepreneurs should be understood as history-makers. They frame entrepreneurship as the skill of cultural innovation or "the ontological skills of disclosing new ways of being" (Spinosa, Flores & Dreyfus, 1997, p. 1). Entrepreneurship, so they argue, transforms our life-worlds by changing the configuration of practices that make life appear the way it does, opening up different ways of relating to ourselves, others and things. Saravathy's (2012) theory of effectuation also proposes to read entrepreneurship as a process of 'worldmaking'. Working from a pragmatist stance, Sarasvathy conceptualizes entrepreneurship as the art of creating new artifacts in the world, and entrepreneurs as people who work in a creative, resource-oriented way and are in constant negotiation with other stakeholders, reshaping reality as they go: "Reality in this worldview is nothing but a negotiated set of constraints to our actions" (Sarasvathy, 2004, p. 525). They each emphasize, as Calás, Smircich & Bourne (2009) have pointed out, that through entrepreneurial projects, new meanings and subjectivities emerge, power is enacted and at the same time resisted.

By enabling new entities, practices and knowledge to jointly emerge (Heidelberger, 1998; Knorr-Cetina, 2002; Latour, 1999b; Law & Urry, 2004), for instance in the form of new accommodation practices and localities in the case of the *zero star hotel*, or by articulating new modes of regional development and collective picnicking in the case of the *BIGNIK*, the artistic enterprise opens up and enacts various forms of social change: shaping and transforming the "ongoing- and context-specific social practices" (Calás, Smircich & Bourne, 2009, p. 560) and the relationships that are constitutive of them.

Reframing cultural entrepreneurship as a productive intervention into the texture of reality and the power-relations that constitute it, the onto-political narrative articulates a cultural entrepreneurial politics that points beyond the normative assumptions inscribed in both the neoliberal and the emancipatory narrative. It allows us to explore the different potentialities of cultural entrepreneurship, both positive and negative, economic and non-economic. With its emphasis on the negotiated and contested nature of such realities and regional ontologies, onto-politics also questions the 'smoothness' of the neoliberal and emancipatory narrative. It highlights the tensions and resistances that entrepreneurial endeavours often need to navigate and negotiate in the process of reconfiguring dominant sociomaterial orders, and is attuned to the struggles that the enactment of new realities entails. It draws our attention to how entrepreneurial projects navigate those struggles, for instance through ongoing experimentation and affective 'tactical movements' (Hjorth, 2005) that create the desire to overcome 'orthodox social imaginaries' (Dey & Mason, 2018) or contain the anxiety that such entrepreneurial projects often entail (Dashtipour & Rumens, 2018). It thus underlines that the generative potential of entrepreneurship, its capacity of 'worldmaking' (Sarasvathy, 2012) cannot be realized without a disruptive force as well. It emphasizes that while reworking these "power-laden, contested and ever changing social terrains" (Calás, Smircich & Bourne, 2009, p. 550), entrepreneurial projects frequently meet with resistance and can fail to change or disrupt the sociomaterial order. In the process they not only subvert, but often also strengthen existing power-relations. The AfS as an art enterprise along its entrepreneurial trajectory, for instance, also feeds off and into the rise of entrepreneurial logics in the art field, thus not only reconfiguring but often also reproducing a certain status quo or a dominant relationship of self-others-things (Knorr-Cetina, 1992; Merleau-Ponty, 1962), oscillating between and intertwining both emancipation and oppression (Verduijn, Essers, Dey & Tedmanson, 2014). From a vital materialist perspective, therefore, there is no such thing as apolitical entrepreneurship. Every entrepreneurial project unfolds what Massumi (2010) calls 'onto-power'. Ultimately, it is an 'empirical' question what kind of ontological configurations might be strengthened or weakened through certain cultural entrepreneurial projects.

Second, by emphasizing the entangled and ontological indeterminate nature of reality that constitutes us at the fold of an ongoing relationship with a multitude of others, and by underpinning the trans-corporeal and affective nature of this entanglement, I suggest that a vital materialist perspective also points us towards the 'ethico-political'

dimension and potential of cultural entrepreneurship. I draw upon 'ethico-politics' as a notion to frame the intricate political capacity that emanates from the process of affective commoning in the *BIGNIK* project. The term has been coined by Pullen & Rhodes (2014), building on the corporeal ethics of feminist philosopher Rosalyn Diprose (2002). It emphasizes ethics as a situated and embodied everyday practice of politics that operates "by encountering and responding to the 'other'" along a sensual generosity towards our shared relational intertwining with the 'flesh-of-the-world' (Pullen & Rhodes, 2014, p. 788; Dale & Latham, 2015). Striving for a genuine respect for the other, it moves us to affectively resist the normalizing powers of institutions and values that coagulate and close down the radical difference of other humans and nonhumans and invites us to expand our bodily self towards new ecologies of encounter, new ways of coupling to the sociomaterial forces around us. Ethico-politics is thus complementary to onto-politics in that it recognizes that ethics and politics cannot be conceived of without each other (Barad, 2007). On the one hand, the sociomaterial territories that configure our everyday lives shape the scope of our ethical encounters with the matters around us. On the other hand, reconfiguring our affective relationships with the materiality of the world also designates the starting point for reimagining our sociomaterial relationships (McMurray, Pullen, & Rhodes, 2011, p. 546). Ethico-politics therefore aims at expanding bodies thresholds for action by nurturing a different mode of being and becoming together (Vachhani & Pullen, 2019), for instance by contributing to an ongoing regional artwork.

Table 8. The aims, modes and tensions of the four politics of cultural entrepreneurship

	neoliberal politics	emancipatory politics	onto-politics	ethico-politics
aim	– economic prosperity and welfare	– distribution of and access to different social goods	– (re-)mattering reality and creating social change	– forging new affective thresholds and solidarities
mode	– creating growth, employment and innovation through entrepreneurship	– addressing environmental and social challenges in entrepreneurial ways	– reconfiguring systems of 'self-others-things' through experimentation	– coupling bodies to other ecologies of intensities that resist privileged ways of being
tension	– inequality, unsustainability	– precarity, self-exploitation	– disruption, resistance	– infraction, vulnerability

The 'ethico-politics' of cultural entrepreneurship then carves out the "the importance of feeling for others as a way of transforming ourselves and the world" (Hemmings, 2012, p. 148). It calls upon us to look more closely at how cultural entrepreneurship opens up sociomaterial orders and inspires other realities by altering our modes of feeling and by subverting "the culturally informed habits of perception and judgement that would perpetuate injustice by shoring up body integrity, singular identity, and their distinction between inside and outside, culture and nature, self and other" (Diprose, 2002, p. 190). In the case of my research, this ethico-political potential is articulated, for instance, through the process of constituting an 'affective commons' that allows to forge and cultivate affective solidarities with an ecology of other humans and nonhumans (Lynch & Kalaitzake, 2020). Being driven by a "collective pursuit of joyful encounters that augment our capacities to affect and be affected by others" (Munro & Thanem, 2018, p. 51; Resch & Steyaert, 2020; Vachhani & Pullen, 2019), it aims at enabling us to access other affective capacities and subjectivities by shifting the affective thresholds that shape how we encounter and are moved by the world around us. At the same time, my exploration of the affective dynamics in the *BIGNIK* process also points towards the affective infractions, tensions and maybe also ethical ambivalences that may arise in cultural entrepreneurial attempts at challenging privileged ways of being and at working "against the stubborn materiality of others" through creating and sustaining such pools of affective capacities (Vachhani & Pullen, 2019, p. 31). As it turns out in the *BIGNIK* project, moving bodies, affective thresholds, and forging new corporeal sensibilities is often entangled with creating other sad passions. It is thus pivotal for such an 'ethico-politics' of cultural entrepreneurship that the entrepreneurial process forges a careful responsiveness and responsibility for the 'critical vulnerability' of the involved bodies, as it navigates the complex affective landscape of its entrepreneurial assemblage in the intimate process of touching the other and becoming touched (Alacovska & Bissonnette, 2019).

Table 8 gives an overview of the aims, modes and tensions of the four politics of entrepreneurship that I am proposing as an outcome of this discussion. Ultimately, both onto-politics and ethico-politics as contributions to the politics of cultural entrepreneurship emphasize that entrepreneurship reconfigures contemporary societies in ways that neither the neoliberal nor the emancipatory narrative of entrepreneurship can account for. They highlight how cultural entrepreneurship brings (new) realities into being through reconfiguring what Rancière (2007, 2009)

would call the 'distribution of the sensible' by shaping and at the same time disrupting ongoing and context specific sociomaterial and affective relations that constitute those realities. Moreover, they emphasize the complex tensions that it needs to tend to and navigate as it aims for such transformations.

7.2.2 The ambiguous politics of commoning

As I have already discussed in chapter 2, labour scholars tend to frame the CCI in a critical vein as highly competitive, individualized and precarious work environments (Oakley, 2004, 2006, 2014). Cultural entrepreneurs, in turn, are depicted as self-interested and utilitarian agents, who are "beguiled and duped by neoliberal injunctions of self-expression and autonomy" (Alacovska & Bissonnette, 2019, p. 2). Moreover, they highlight how the ideal of a 'care-free' individualism has for a long time shaped the symbolic, affective and practical dimensions of work within the CCI (Alacovska & Bissonnette, 2019; Conor, Gill, & Taylor, 2015; Ekman, 2013). However, recently research has also started to acknowledge the great interdependence of creative work and cultural entrepreneurial processes which produce and innovate symbolic and aesthetic values along complex collaborative networks, alliances and economies of favours (Daskalaki, 2010; Gehman & Soublière, 2017; Hjorth, 2013; Candace Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen & Townley, 2016; M. Scott, 2012). Moreover, research is becoming more attuned to its community-oriented dimensions (Harvie, 2013) by acknowledging that creative work is frequently and deeply enmeshed with "a distinct form of other-centred work, or labour of care, in which interpersonal connectedness, relationality and attentiveness to the vulnerability of others are fundamental characteristics of work" (Alacovska & Bissonnette, 2019, p. 12). One way in which such a cultural entrepreneurial labour of care can manifest itself, as my analysis of the *BIGNIK* project has shown, is in its shared production of an 'affective commons'. The notion of an affective commons valorises cultural entrepreneurship by emphasizing how it fosters subjectivities, aesthetic experiences and affective intensities as common values and resources for local, regional or national communities. Moreover, it underlines this creative labour as a process of commoning which is upheld by a collective of people who are "devoted, caring and concerned" about protecting and creating these common resources (Wuthnow, 1995, p. 8).

The situated and ongoing labour that sustains and constitutes the commoning process around such affective commons is to a big extent of non-contractual and non-market nature and undercuts the dominant binary of paid work versus care labour (Alacovska & Bissonnette, 2019). Affective commons as a notion thus also contributes to ongoing debates around the politics, tensions and ambiguities of immaterial labour in cultural entrepreneurship and aesthetic capitalism (Hoedemaekers, 2018; Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019). Furthermore, it also contributes to the stream of feminist politics and feminist organizational theory in management and organization studies in broader terms (Bell, Meriläinen, Taylor, & Tienari, 2019; Kenny & Fotaki, 2015; Pullen & Rhodes, 2014; Pullen, Rhodes, & Thanem, 2017; Vachhani & Pullen, 2019) by carving out a 'feminist political ecology' perspective on cultural entrepreneurship (Clement, Harcourt, Joshi, & Sato, 2019). It builds on a long-standing debate around the societal importance and organizational struggle of producing and fostering such 'commons' as social systems in which resources are shared and nurtured by a community of users and producers rather than being organized along private ownership structures. The theoretical debate around the commons has been pioneered in particular by the political economist Elinor Ostrom (1992), who challenged 'the tragedy of the commons', i.e. the prevailing view that open access to resources necessarily leads to a free-rider problem. Later, her work was expanded from natural and material resources (such as land, water or forests) towards immaterial resources (such as knowledge or peer software production) (De Angelis, 2017; De Angelis & Harvie, 2014; Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019). Recently, commons theory was revitalized in particular around questions and debates of 'alternative organizing' (Daskalaki, 2018; De Angelis & Harvie, 2014; Parker, Cheney, Fournier, & Land, 2014) and 'eco-feminist' politics (Caffentzis & Federici, 2014; Federici, 2019; Mies, 2014; Singh, 2017; Tola, 2015) as well as radical critical political theory (Hardt & Negri, 2005, 2011).

Framing cultural entrepreneurship as a process of 'commoning' other affective capacities and sociomaterial relations and constituting a realm in which social connectivity is not mediated by commodity relations points to its transformative capacity beyond current neoliberal regimes (De Angelis, 2017; Federici, 2019). At the same time, the relationship between commoning and neoliberal capitalism is ambiguous as "their co-dependence and co-evolution makes it difficult to point out which of the two systems uses the other" (De Angelis & Harvie, 2014, p. 290). In this research project, the cultural entrepreneurial process of commoning affective capacities around the agentic capacities of idle fabrics,

the rhythmic organization of time and the rhizomatic becoming of collectivity thus oscillates between being co-opted by neoliberalism, for instance along public policies that foster affective commons in an attempt at harvesting them as a branding resource in the struggle for regional competitiveness (Go & Lemmetyinen, 2015; Loy, 2015); between offering a 'fix' for contemporary capitalism and its social fragmentation and material exploitation by fostering new affective solidarities with humans and nonhumans (Oakley, 2004, 2006, 2014) as well as pointing towards alternative forms of social and communal reproduction that eschew commercialization on a razor edge. This ambiguity between creating 'commons-within-and-for-capital' and 'commoning-beyond-capital' constantly needs to be renegotiated along the cultural entrepreneurial process, for instance when deliberating potential partnerships, and is often also a question of the strategic and tactical power gathered in the cultural entrepreneurial assemblage (De Angelis & Harvie, 2014; Federici, 2019).

Moreover, my vital material analysis of such a commoning process in cultural entrepreneurship highlights that the struggle of producing and sustaining affective commons in cultural entrepreneurial processes is two-fold. For one, it needs to navigate the challenge of governing and moving bodied towards the collective process of commoning these affective resources in a way that ensures that the relational processes which are constitutive of the affective commons are enacted rather than just appropriated by those that become entangled with it and by ensuring that its affective resources are adequately distributed among those who contribute to its production. However, it is also a struggle between the commons vis-à-vis the sociomaterial forces that dominate and shape the outside of the commons. As De Angelis & Harvie (2014) emphasize, commons are constantly challenged to articulate themselves against other (capitalist) value practices. The process of commoning is thus a site where alternative value practices and at times antagonistic sociomaterial relations and orders clash and compete: passive versus agentic couplings to materiality, rhythmic versus directional couplings to time, functionalistic versus rhizomatic couplings to collectivity. While commoning research is starting to acknowledge the importance of affective relations in producing 'commoning subjects' (Nightingale, 2019; Singh, 2017), my analysis shows that it is the interplay of four different affective tactics that enact a "differential sense of being" which invites and commits bodies to the process of commoning (Barad, 2003, p. 817). Hence, these affective tactics play a central role not only in fostering and sustaining the affective commons, but also in articulating the process of commoning

and its subjects and sociomaterial relations against the pull of other or dominant value practices and sociomaterial orders. In the case of the *BIGNIK*, the tactics need to continuously articulate the affective commons against the legitimacy of our everyday sociomaterial orders that for instance articulate materiality as contained, time as goal-oriented or collectivity as consumptive.

Moreover, the notion of commons also offers a new angle to look at the ambiguous power structures in the CCI (Hoedemaekers, 2018). While commons theorists often emphasize the importance of democratic and horizontal modes of governing (De Angelis, 2017; De Angelis & Harvie, 2014; Waters-Lynch & Duff, 2019), recent research is also starting to acknowledge that commoning is a relation "that is underpinned by conflict, authority, recognition, as well as collaboration, cooperation and consensus" (Nightingale, 2019, p. 21). The affective tactics that propel the process of commoning in this case highlight how the production of commons is entangled with and emerges from the exercise of power. As the analysis has illustrated, the intra-active interplay of the four tactics sustains the *BIGNIK* as affective commons by producing a specific agentic cut, encouraging certain couplings and entanglements while at the same time discouraging others. Therefore, the different sociomaterial relationships and subjectivities which the process of commoning is able to forge through its exercise of power articulate new inclusions but also exclusions. They provoke affective acquiescence by the participants and collaborators as well as refusal of these relationships. Attempts at subjection and moments of coming together can be succeeded by attempts at un-commoning, as we could see for instance in the suspense-packed relationship of the AfS with the CDA (Nightingale, 2019). Although the affective commons produced in cultural entrepreneurial processes foster collective ways of relating to humans and nonhumans that are a counter move to various forms of capitalist relations, they are not always or automatically egalitarian forms of social organizing (Federici, 2019). In the case of my research, the cultural entrepreneurial process of commoning the *BIGNIK* subverts the gendered power structures that perpetuate the CCI by integrating and staging the domestic work of women, who are often excluded from creative and artistic work due to their commitments to reproductive labour (Alacovska & Bissonnette, 2019). At the same time, it also reproduces these gendered power structures by assigning women executing rather than strategic roles, in which they 'gift' their labour rather than forge it in the process of commoning (Allen, 2013; Conor, Gill & Taylor, 2015; Dodd, 2012).

The question of power seems to be particularly salient in the CCI where social cooperation, relations of reciprocity, shared responsibility and an openness to heterogeneous experiences are often paired with a concentration of creative authority on the shoulders of a few artistic visionaries who co-produce affective commons and communities by articulating radical sociomaterial imaginaries. Within the art field, attempts at democratizing creative authority within participative processes of cultural and affective commoning are debated and discussed critically. Bishop (2012), for instance, points out that artistic projects that emphasize distributed modes of leadership and power often struggles to produce other affective and sociomaterial relations that challenge rather than just accommodate the status quo (Bishop, 2012; Federici, 2019). Ultimately, the affective commons produced through cultural entrepreneurship are thus highly contingent achievements "never free from the ambivalence and contradictions of power" (Nightingale, 2019, p. 3). Looking more closely at how the relationships between the different participants, positions of power and authority in such processes of commoning are negotiated along a "continual play of mutual tension, recognition and dependency" (Bishop, 2012, p. 279) that stays with the trouble seems particularly important if we want to understand how cultural entrepreneurship could contribute to a feminist politics of organizing (Nightingale, 2019).

7.3 Vital materialist research approaches: current contributions and future openings

In this chapter, I have tried to unfold how crafting and adopting a vital materialist perspective allows me to contribute to a more profound understanding of both the processes and politics of cultural entrepreneurship in the field of organization studies. Analysing the entrepreneurial trajectory of the AfS and one of its main projects, the *zero star hotel*, I contended that cultural entrepreneurial assemblages navigate agency and constraint in those collaborative networks through an ongoing process of experimentation. The vital materialist model of entrepreneurial experimentation that I developed with the help of Rheinberger and other vital materialist thinkers emphasizes experimentation not as a singular event but as an ongoing process that revolves around tentative notions of a future entrepreneurial and cultural configuration to come. Constituting a dynamic and fragile assemblage, experimentation is driven more by the agentic capacities of different human-nonhuman entanglements than

the intentionality of the experimenters themselves. By 'playing with sociomaterial boundaries', 'navigating bodily connections' and 'moving in a speculative process', the process of experimentation remains productive, generating and disrupting reality at the same time. This vital materialist model of experimentation not only opens up the scope of entrepreneurial experimentation beyond dominant instrumental readings. It also articulates a new processual understanding of how cultural entrepreneurial endeavours try to breach institutional and organizational boundaries and articulate 'minor rebellions' as they pursue aesthetic production and innovation within those collaborative networks. In my analysis of the *BIGNIK* project, I tuned more closely into the bodily relations of such cultural entrepreneurial processes. In the analysis, I carved out four affective tactics and their interplay as relational maneuvers which the entrepreneurial process continuously draws upon to shape the affective capacities of bodies towards this process of boundary transgression and transformation. These four affective tactics highlight that the relational work in cultural entrepreneurial processes needs to produce shifts not only in symbolic and sociomaterial boundaries, but more importantly also in the affective capacities of the different collaborators. They point to the affective momentum that cultural entrepreneurial processes continuously try to create, by generating and proliferating joyous encounters with new sociomaterial configurations and collective imaginaries and, if necessary, sad encounters in relation to more established sociomaterial orders. Such a vital materialist understanding highlights the importance of material agencies and affective capacities and the intersection of the two in cultural entrepreneurial processes. It instigates us, for instance, to further explore how cultural entrepreneurs work with the malleability of sociomateriality and nurture an 'extimate' connection to their entrepreneurial assemblages to negotiate the tensions, constraints and affective capacities arising along such entrepreneurial trajectories.

Second, I argued that my analyses also revisit the critical-political capacities of such cultural entrepreneurial processes. As I have pointed out in this chapter, a vital materialist perspective allows us to conceptualize cultural entrepreneurial politics beyond the dominant neoliberal and emancipatory narrative, by pointing towards its onto- and ethico-political capacity. The notion of onto-politics, on the one hand, emphasizes the capacity of cultural entrepreneurship to re-matter reality. It does so by articulating different human-nonhuman entanglements in its process of experimentation – reconfiguring the systems of ‚self-others-things' that organize the embodied experience

of our everyday lives. The notion of ethico-politics, on the other hand, highlights the capacity of cultural entrepreneurship to forge new affective thresholds and affective solidarities. It allows bodies to couple to alternative ecologies of encounter that resist privileged ways of being. A vital materialist perspective also sheds a new light on the politics of commoning inscribed into many cultural entrepreneurial endeavours and their emancipatory concerns. It highlights how cultural entrepreneurship as a process of commoning fosters different affective relations as collectively produced and shared resources and points towards its capacity of organizing forms of social connectivity which are driven by a shared concern and care for those sociomaterial relations and affective capacities. Such a vital materialist perspective thus also emphasizes the transformative potential of cultural entrepreneurship to point beyond the current neoliberal regimes in aesthetic capitalism. Then again, a vital materialist perspective is not only attuned to the transformative capacity of cultural entrepreneurship but also to the subtle power relations that are at work in these ethico- and onto-political processes and politics of commoning. It stresses that the process of re-mattering reality is frequently met with resistance as it tries to rearticulate dominant sociomaterial orders or forge new common notions. Moreover, it unravels how the tactics used to move the affective capacities of bodies towards enacting and supporting the emancipatory potential of cultural entrepreneurial initiatives also articulate subtle modes of domination. They try to keep bodies committed to and passionate about certain sociomaterial relations while discouraging their entanglement with others. Ultimately, even cultural entrepreneurial processes of commoning are never power-free sites. They, too, actualize and rearticulate certain power structures (for instance around gender), while subverting others (around neoliberal understandings of cultural production). Getting a better grip on how cultural entrepreneurs can negotiate and reflect these subtle power relations as a part of their ongoing processes of aesthetic production and innovation seems one important avenue for further research. There a vital materialist sensitivity for porous bodies, for (alternative) ecologies of encounter and complex human-nonhuman entanglements will continue to be instructive.



‘And those who were seen dancing were thought to be insane by those who could not hear the music.’

Friedrich Nietzsche

Q8



8 Conclusion: imagining and experimenting with alternative organizational ecologies

In the previous chapters, I have guided you through a rich cartography of cultural entrepreneurial processes that took us from the dynamic topographies of contemporary aesthetic capitalism, via the unruly assemblages, visceral ecologies and affective bodies of vital materialist thinking to the craft of becoming entangled in affective research. We dived into the experimentalism of the artistic enterprise and its *zero star hotel* project, were swept up in the resonating intensities and affective tactics organizing the ecology of encounters at the *BIGNIK* and discussed the 'onto-political' and 'ethico-political' capacities of cultural entrepreneurship as well as its ambivalent politics of commoning, respectively. In doing so, I attempted to articulate a different kind of 'truth' about cultural entrepreneurship, a truth that is (more) attuned to its affective capacities and the material processes that shape it. At the same time, I hope I have also managed to articulate and invite you to experience a different 'aesthetics' and 'politics' of cultural entrepreneurship. Aesthetics and politics which evoke and thrive on the sensual and affective capacities of cultural entrepreneurship to materialize and imagine different ways of how we can become together and encounter others – both with and as human and nonhumans. Crafting this research over the past four and a half years in many ways felt like an intricate experimental process to me, too – not just because "to think is to experiment" (Deleuze & Guattari, 1994, p. 111) but because as I was organizing and undertaking this PhD, I was continuously propelled by an obscure sense of this future knowledge that I wanted to articulate. As I experimented with/during this research, I worked with a hybrid bricolage of different conceptual streams in order to see what kind of theoretical agency might surface at their interstices. I followed my bodily connection to the research field and the data as my analysis meandered along a serial speculative process – sensing rather than knowing where it would take me. Like all experimental systems, also the experimental system of my PhD was brittle. It threatened to disintegrate along the diverging momentum and interests of the theories that I was mobilizing and the tensions and gaps that existed between the different literatures I worked with (the literature on entrepreneurship and the literature on the CCI or between the organizational literature on materiality, embodiment and affect). The ephemerality of this epistemic thing that I felt fluttering in the data drove me

to desperation at times. Yet, somehow, the experimental system and I kept going. It is many small things that kept us persisting: the curiosity, encouragement and feedback that we received from peers when I presented and spoke about my research at colloquia and conferences as well as the interest and wonder with which the project was acknowledged by people in the field, my friends or my hairdresser; the flow and excitement that overcame me when I suddenly stumbled on a theory that resonated with this emerging understanding of the phenomenon, or when participants uttered those very tensions and processes that I was sensing as I participated in the field events. However, what kept it going most of all, I think, is this strange affective attachment that I had developed to the field and research problem itself. A kind of luminous quality that I felt radiating from cultural entrepreneurial processes in CCI and that kept pulling me in, seeping into my awareness at the fringes of my field of vision and corporeal perception. While I may always have been particularly attuned to the agentic materiality and affective capacities moving and emanating from cultural entrepreneurship, they have never been felt more starkly in a collective manner as during this spring, when cultural life suddenly came to a halt in an unexpected and probably unprecedented way, as the world suddenly was facing a global public health crisis which impeded societal and organizational life unlike anything I had experienced before.

While the COVID-19 pandemic has affected economic and organizational life across all sectors for years to come and with no end of the plight in sight yet, the CCI have arguably been amongst the earliest and maybe most severely impacted by the pandemic's reorganization of public life. Most cultural venues had to close their doors at least temporarily and many art initiatives and institutions, artistic enterprises and cultural entrepreneurs still grapple with the new ways in which they are challenged to offer and create their goods and experiences during times of 'social distancing'. After all, much of the work in the CCI involves the close gathering of a group of people that create and consume aesthetic experiences in the form of concerts, parties, movies, art performances, readings and so forth. The financial damage varies greatly between and within the different sectors of the CCI, with emerging artists, smaller cultural venues, less established creative enterprises and already underfunded cultural institutions suffering in particular from the cancellation of creative and artistic activities and their related revenue streams. What the medium term effects of this pandemic on the bigger institutions and festivals and the sector as a whole will be remains to be seen and

is not to be underestimated (Grand, Martel, Page, & Weckerle, 2020). The pandemic has also showcased a paradox that has been structuring the CCI as a sector for the past decades and only has been elevated through COVID-19 and the measures taken to contain it. By radically reducing the cultural life available, it has made audiences, publics and consumers strikingly aware of those complex, luminous values which are continuously created by the CCI, not only in economic but also in societal terms. At the end of the day, the CCI, as the president of the Swiss association for the creative economies points out 'give colour to society'. They contribute in an immanent way to the affective, aesthetic and material landscapes that organize our (collective) everyday lives, making them more vibrant, meaningful and enjoyable on multiple dimensions (Kälin, 2020). The CCI not only generate jobs, but also foster the communication and integration between communities. In times of confinement, there is an increased longing to turn to artists and creatives for information and entertainment, for comfort and perspectives (Grand, Martel, Page & Weckerle, 2020). And indeed, actors from all arrays of the CCI have responded to the cultural impoverishment of our everyday lives created by the lockdown by exploring new means of giving publics access to cultural and creative contents. Balconies, for instance, suddenly emerged as an unexpected cultural space, hosting concerts or showcasing galleries. What is more, the pandemic has also further propelled the digitization of cultural goods, prompting creative and cultural organizations to work with new online formats of their events, exhibitions and performances. This content has contributed to the ongoing visibility of artists and creative organizations and shaped the affective, aesthetic and material landscape which we have navigated during the pandemic. Yet it has not necessarily helped alleviate the financial pressures which cultural and creative enterprises are experiencing, but rather highlighted the complex challenges which many cultural entrepreneurs face today.

Some of these challenges which the COVID-19 pandemic has now articulated in such a pronounced way are already simmering in the entrepreneurial trajectory and projects of the artistic enterprise that we followed along the story of this PhD. As we unfolded the material and affective relations that shape the cultural entrepreneurial processes of the AfS, we have come to understand and experience the intricate process of entrepreneurial experimentation that has driven the material reconfiguration of both their artistic projects and entrepreneurial position over the past two decades in their attempt at finding fruitful configurations that allow them to tie together both business necessities and artistic claims in their work. We have also been able to grasp

how the entrepreneurial process draws upon different affective tactics to move bodies along new ecologies of encounters that articulate themselves as affective commons in the force field of dominant cultural and economic modes of relating. One can read the results which I have carved out and the contributions I have proposed over the past chapters as local onto-epistemologies that are intricately tied to the specificity of this artistic enterprise and its cultural entrepreneurial process. And to do so would not be wrong. After all, vital material research practices are interested in articulating a certain "geography of what happens" in cultural entrepreneurship (Thrift, 2008: 2), rather than trying to unearth some kind of universal truth. Nevertheless, I think it is relevant to consider to what degree the results I have articulated might apply to cultural entrepreneurship in a broader sense. The model of entrepreneurial experimentation that I developed emphasizes the capacity of experimentation to articulate different 'regional ontologies'. It moves along a vague sense of novelty that tries to articulate itself in the interplay of agency and constraint through the entrepreneurial processes. While aesthetic innovation is at the core of many cultural entrepreneurial projects and processes, the extent to which cultural entrepreneurs search to reconfigure and re-matter their respective art world varies. Cultural entrepreneurs that assume 'mainstream' positions in their field will probably draw less upon experimentation and rather organize themselves by adopting the dominant conventions of doing art and business. I would expect the entrepreneurial processes of 'misfits' to be more experimental as they do not abide or constrain themselves by these norms and therefore have more freedom to explore, yet also less resistance to work against. Finally, I assume that cultural entrepreneurial processes of 'mavericks' or 'amphibians' will be propelled by and rely the most on entrepreneurial experimentation. They draw upon experimentation to push and bridge the boundaries of their field while working productively with the arising constraints in order to stay credible to the collaborative networks and intermediaries that shape those conventions (Candace Jones, Svejenova, Pedersen & Townley, 2016; Ortmann & Sydow, 2018). Then again, the pandemic might force also 'mainstream' cultural entrepreneurs to become more 'experimental' in terms of the materialities and business strategies that propel their work, the exacerbated friction challenging them to bring forth new voices, new styles and new models (Grand, Martel, Page & Weckerle, 2020).

Similarly, I expect that many cultural entrepreneurial processes will deploy some of the affective tactics which I have carved out in an attempt to create 'buzz' around

their projects (M. Scott, 2012) and shape the affective capacities of their audiences and collaborators. 'Attuning' and 'opening' are likely the ones being most frequently drawn upon by the less radically inclined initiatives and projects. While it would be somewhat of an overstatement to presume that cultural entrepreneurship is always about moving bodies towards alternative ecologies of encounters, I would argue that it is a poignant way to theorize from an organizational perspective those participatory art practices that have become characteristic for the post-studio or situationist turn of contemporary art which Bourriaud (2010) tried to frame through his 'relational aesthetics'. Moreover, the notion of the 'affective commons' invites us to reflect on how cultural entrepreneurship produces affects as collective values in contemporary societies within and beyond the current pandemic situation. While certainly not all affective capacities created by cultural entrepreneurship are organized in such an explicit way around 'commoning' activities as it is the case in the *BIGNIK*, one may wonder whether forms of commoning collectively shared affective resources are not happening more frequently, especially in the contemporary landscape of digital 'prosumer' culture. After all, the collectively shared affects emanating from a series like Game of Thrones, of the artwork of Pippi Lotti Rist or the music of popstars like Taylor Swift would not exist in the same way if it was not for the millions of people that cared and engaged with those works on Twitter and Instagram, in memes and extended blogposts, puzzling over their (hidden) meanings, commenting on and evaluating their latest output or sharing their emotional reactions. The pandemic has certainly highlighted the relevance of the CCI for forging vibrant public spheres and at the same time problematized the big gap that still exists between how cultural products as affective commons are valorised collectively when it comes to their consumption as opposed to their production.

I do believe there is merit to reading the results of this research project as traces that presence a certain truth about processes which are at work not only in the art enterprise which I followed, but to some degree also in cultural entrepreneurship more generally, at least in our current socio-historic constellation. Yet, I think it is even more productive to read these findings not just as traces but as a map that allows us to explore where cultural entrepreneurship could go, what it could become in the future and how it could animate our thinking about organizational and entrepreneurial processes in the CCI and beyond. After all, my research has not only pointed towards the experimental processes and affective tactics that shape cultural entrepreneurship, it has also

emphasized both their onto- and ethico-political capacity. As conceptual notions, onto-politics and ethico-politics dare us as organizational scholars and practitioners to become aware of, embrace and work with the intricate political force that cultural entrepreneurship unfolds. It is a political force that shapes our everyday worlds by configuring and reconfiguring the systems of 'self-others-things' as a dynamic nexus and material fabric "through which the social (organizational) world emerges" (Hales, Riach & Tyler, 2019, p. 3). It materializes different ways of being and feeling at the same time by reworking our affective thresholds and coupling our bodies to new ecologies of intensities in intimate human-nonhuman encounters (Hemmings, 2012). In embracing and emphasizing this onto-political and ethico-political force of cultural entrepreneurship, this research thus also opens up new avenues for cultural policies – policies that value and support the livelihood of cultural entrepreneurial endeavours less for their contributions to aesthetic capitalism, and more for their capacity of commoning and reviving the material and affective topographies that make our communities and societies vibrant, connective and meaningful. As the pandemic has highlighted, in Switzerland the development of a more substantial legal framework for the social security of cultural entrepreneurs and creatives could be one step in this direction, for instance in the form of a basic income.

Besides, in their interplay onto- and ethico-politics also sketch a map for moving towards more feminist political ecologies and 'alternative constellations of organizing' and allow us to explore how organization studies and organization theory can contribute to them by venturing new aims and questions (Beyes & Holt, 2020). They invite us, for instance, to inquire if (cultural) entrepreneurship and organizational life in general could become more experimental and more caring and animate us to carve out in more detail how they might assemble together. Or they move us to examine how affective tactics could help us forge new ways of relating with diverse humans and nonhumans and nurture more expansive 'affective solidarities' for tackling matters such as climate change, sexism of racism (Hemmings, 2012). Ultimately, they should also challenge us to find new ways to address the striking diversity issues which still haunt cultural entrepreneurship and the CCI in particular (Finkel, Jones, Sang, & Stoyanova Russell, 2017; Janssens & Steyaert, 2019). Then again, they also point towards the subtle and complex power dynamics that are at play in the material and affective processes of social and cultural innovation, their force in not only increasing our bodily capacities but also inflicting affective infractions. Onto- and

ethico-politics thus also draw attention to the more ambiguous shades that are lurking in the shadows of the transformative politics of cultural entrepreneurship, shades that in my opinion merit greater consideration also in future research. Moreover, the vital materialist lens which I have elaborated to theorize the onto- and ethico-political capacity of cultural entrepreneurship and to conjure this map also requires us to reexamine our representational and interpretative research practices. It incites us to find more embodied and material ways of doing and writing organizational research, highlighting the capacities of our affective engagement with sociomateriality to transform ourselves and others. At the same time, it also underlines the complex ethical entanglements we need to attend to in our myriad relations with other humans and nonhumans as we undertake research. While the feminist political ecologies of vital materialism should not blind us to other structural dimensions of contemporary power structures, inequities and exclusions in our more-than-human organizational world (Levy, Reinecke, & Manning, 2016; Eikhof, 2017), it opens organization studies into the "affective realm of 'wild new imaginaries' emerging from repertoires of sensation and emotion […] and the promise of an alternative politics of generosity, respect and readiness" (Lorimer, 2005, p. 90).

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only intensified the entrepreneurial struggles and tensions that pervade the contemporary CCI, visibly marking our transformed material and affective topographies by catapulting all of a sudden, the majority of our social and public engagements into the virtual sphere. It has also articulated a deep incision into the temporal structures of our everyday organized lives. Depending on our personal and professional configurations, this had vastly different effects. Families and mothers in particular, being confined to working from home and with home-schooled children still struggle to get work done. Other people, among them also many cultural entrepreneurs, are confronted with an excess of idle time paired with a financial and/or existential crisis as their artistic activities and incomes have suddenly broken away. Being in the privileged situation of having to neither look after small children nor worry about my income, I personally cherished the rhythmic space which the pandemic opened up for delving into the process of writing this thesis without having to constantly shield myself from pending appointments, tempting social invitations and cultural events. Similarly, the AfS also embraced the room that opened up as many of their public engagements, including this year's *BIGNIK* was stripped from their calendars. They spent one week working on a square next

to the cathedral in the middle of St. Gallen, carving their very own interpretation of the ten commandments, for once in silence, into big sandstone plates as a public performance and materialization of their personal reflection around their artistic practice over the past twenty years. The *Zehn Gebote Vol. 2* [Ten Commandments Vol. 2] were created in collaboration with a blockchain start-up which uses the ten commandments as a mission statements for their own enterprise and allows others to invest in them as an expression of their attempt to disrupt, humanize and democratize contemporary investment practices. In an illegal action, the artists with the help of several commandment sentinels transported the ten barrels of stone into the heart of the notorious financial district in Zurich, where they were plunged into the river, visible as a sunk manifesto (image 22).



Image 22. Sentinels pushing the sand blocks of 'Zehn Gebote Vol. 2' through Zurich
Credits: Philipp Jeker

I Believe in the urgency of your thoughts

II Trust insanity and question the conventional

III Break in so others can break out

IV Venture into new territories and surprise yourself

V Create new realities and make them happen

VI Be convinced and you will not need courage

VII Endure criticism as it drives discourse

VIII Accept antagonism as it is a sign that something new is happening

IX Do not look for customers, find accomplices

X Keep processes going even if they seem to end

Of course, it only took a few weeks until local authorities ordered the artists to clear the commandments from the river ground. According to them, the plates were watercourse pollution. While the commandments are still looking for a new home, they, so I hope, already inspire and affect our scholarly (and other) endeavours to become bolder, more surprising, more collaborative and more disruptive as we imagine the organizational assemblages and topographies of the future and work towards alternative ecologies of encounter.

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Visuals

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Appendix

Overview shadowing

In the following I present an overview of my shadowing that shows when and where my field visits took place, how many people from the field participated and the main projects around which the field activities revolved.

29/08/2017, studio, 2 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

14/09/2017, external, 5 participants: energy provider

07/11/2017, studio, 2 participants: energy provider

09/11/2017, external, 7 participants: energy provider

23/11/2017, studio, 4 participants: energy provider

09/03/2017, studio, 2 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

25/08/2017, studio, 3 participants: zero star hotel.

28/08/2017, external, 9 participants: zero star hotel, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

29/08/2017, studio, 2 participants: zero star hotel, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

30/08/2017, studio & external, 7 participants: zero star hotel.

31/08/2017, studio & external, 5 participants: BIGNIK, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

01/09/2017, studio, 3 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

05/09/2017, studio & external, 4 participants: zero star hotel.

06/09/2017, external, 3 participants: zero star hotel.

07/09/2017, studio, 2 participants: zero star hotel.

08/09/2017, external, 2 participants: zero star hotel.

12/09/2017, studio, 10+ participants: zero star hotel.

13/09/2017, studio, 5 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

14/09/2017, studio, 3 participants: zero star hotel.

23/10/2017, studio, 2 participants: zero star hotel.

25/10/2017, external, 4 participants: BIGNIK.

27/11/2017, studio & external, 6 participants: zero star hotel.

18/12/2017, studio, 3 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

22/12/2017, studio, 2participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

18/01/2018, studio, 3 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes, spin-off, zero star hotel.

19/01/2018, studio, 4 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

28/01/2018, studio, 4 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

05/02/2018, external, 10+ participants: peace village.

08/02/2018, studio & external, 6 participants: BIGNIK, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

09/02/2018, studio, 6 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

12/02/2018, external, 8 participants: planning agency.

23/02/2018, studio, 3 participants: zero star hotel.

24/02/2018, external, 6 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

26/02/2018, studio, 6 participants: peace village, zero star hotel, BIGNIK, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

28/02/2018, studio & external: 10+ participants: peace village, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

01/03/2018, studio, 3 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

02/03/2018, external, 7 participants: spin-off, zero star hotel, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

12/03/2018, external, 10+ participants: peace village, BIGNIK.

02/04/2018, studio, 3 participants: zero star hotel.

04/04/2018, external, 8 participants: planning agency.

06/04/18, studio, 3 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

10/04/2018, studio, 3 participants: BIGNIK

12/04/2018, studio, 4 participants: zero star hotel, peace village, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

14/04/2018, studio, 10+ participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

16/04/2018, studio, 5 participants: zero star hotel.

20/04/2018, external, 4 participants: zero star hotel.

29/04/2018, external, 10+ participants: peace village.

07/05/2018, studio, 10+ participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

08/05/2018, studio, 4 participants: zero real estate.

31/05/2018, external, 6 participants: pension fund, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

28/08/2018, studio, 3 participants: zero real estate, spin-off.

02/09/2018, external, 10+ participants: zero real estate.

14/09/2018, studio, 5 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

17/09/2018, external, 7 participants: BIGNIK.

18/09/2018, studio, 3 participants: spin-off.

20/09/2018, external, 10+ participants: peace village.

02/10/2018, studio, 3 participants: spin-off.

03/10/2018, external, 10+ participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

04/10/2018, external, 8 participants, pension fund.

22/11/2018, external, 4 participants: spin-off.

16/01/2019, studio, 10+ participants: zero real estate.

18/01/2019, external, 6 participants: pension fund, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

22/01/2019, external, 10+ participants: spin-off, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

18/02/2019, external, 4 participants: BIGNIK.

24/02/2019, studio, 4 participants: BIGNIK.

01/03/2019, external, 3 participants: BIGNIK.

05/03/2019, studio & external, 5 participants: pension fund, everyday entrepreneurial processes.

15/03/2019, studio, 3 participants: pension fund.

31/03/2019, external, 4 participants: everyday entrepreneurial processes.

03/04/2019, external, 10+ participants: BIGNIK.

15/04/2019, external, 5 participants: BIGNIK.

23/05/2019, external, 10+ participants: BIGNIK.

24/05/2019, external, 10+ participants: BIGNIK.

27/05/2019, external, 7 participants: pension fund.

23/06/2019, external, 10+ participants: BIGNIK.

20/02/2020, studio, 3 participants: BIGNIK.

13/03/2020, studio, 10+ participants: zero real estate.

Overview interviews

Group discussions

Sensitizing questions: current experience of project (translated)

I – How and why did you get involved in the project?

II – How did you experience the processes and your involvement in the project?

III – Did participating in the project precipitate something in you?

Sensitizing questions: long-term process (translated)

I – If you think about [project], which incidences/moments do you remember vividly?

II – How did you experience the organizational process of the project?

III – Which tensions and challenges characterize the organizational process?

Oveerview

22/08/2018, zero real estate, current experience of project, 6 participants, 1:21:02

23/06/2019, BIGNIK, current experience of project, 6 participants, 49:16

04/09/2019, BIGNIK, long-term organizational process, 7 participants, 1:48:37

11/09/2019, zero star hotel, long-term organizational process, 6 participants, 1:36:15

Individual interviews

Detailed and tailored interview guidelines were developed for each interview. They will not be shown however to protect the anonymity of the interviewees.

24/07/2019, 1 participant, 53:08

10/08/2019, 2 participants, 01:51:31

29/08/2019, 1 participant, 32:50

29/08/2019, 1 participant, 01:23:00

25/02/2020, 1 participant, 01:44:26

Field interviews

Sensitizing questions (translated)

I – How come you are participating at this event today?

II – How have you experienced the event so far?

III – Have you noticed anything that you found particularly surprising or striking?

Overview

03/04/2019, BIGNIK information event, 1 participant, 02:47

03/04/2019, BIGNIK information event, 1 participant, 03:10

03/04/2019, BIGNIK information event, 1 participant, 04:34

03/04/2019, BIGNIK information event, 1 participant, 01:56

23/05/2019, BIGNIK sewing event, 1 participant, 04:37

23/05/2019, BIGNIK sewing event, 1 participant, 02:06

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 2 participants, 03:10

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 1 participant, 01:22

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 3 participants, 12:30

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 2 participants, 07:17

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 2 participants, 03:10

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 1 participant, 03:28

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 1 participant, 04:16

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 1 participant, 02:31

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 2 participants, 09:51

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 5 participants, 07:51

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 4 participants, 08:29

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 1 participant, 02:39

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 1 participant, 07:14

23/06/2019, BIGNIK assembly, 1 participant, 05:22

Coding cloud



CV Christina Lüthy

Personal Data

Name	Christina Lüthy
Date of birth	16.05.1987
Place of birth	Zürich
Nationality	Swiss
Orchid	0000-0002-5407-6268

Education

02/2016 – 07/2021 University of St. Gallen, PhD Program Organization Studies and Cultural Theory

- Thesis: 'Towards alternative ecologies of encounter: crafting a vital materialist perspective of cultural entrepreneurship'
- Supervisors: Prof. Dr. Chris Steyaert (University St. Gallen), Prof Dr. Martin Müller (University of Lausanne)
- grade: 6.0 (highest mark 6, lowest mark 1)
- Focal point: entrepreneurship studies, creative and cultural industries, process organizational theory, affect theory, vital materialism, post-qualitative research methods

09/2012– 06/2015 University of St. Gallen, MA Management, Organization and Culture

- Focal point: space, body, aesthetics, ethnography, cultural and creative industries, post-colonialism
- Master thesis: 'Assembling music festivals as affective spaces: a more-than-representational research approach', grade: 6.0 (highest mark 6, lowest mark 1)
- Grade average: 5.75 (highest mark 6, lowest mark 1)

08/2008 – 07/2012 University of Basel, BA Social Science and Biology

- Focal point: science and technology studies, gender studies, urban sociology, cultural sociology and theory, discourse theory
- Grade average: 6.0 (highest mark 6, lowest mark 1)

07/2010 – 01/2011 Université Lille I/III (Lille, France), exchange semester

- Coursework in urban geography, history of the family, health anthropology, sociology

08/2003 – 07/2007 Kantonsschule Wettingen, high school / A-levels

- Majors: economy and law, arts
- Thesis: exhibition 'Inventive humanity – tracing creative processes', grade: 6.0 (highest mark 6 lowest mark 1)
- Grade average: 5.6 (highest mark 6, lowest mark 1)

07/2004 – 08/2005 Danville Park Girls High School (Durban, South Africa)

Employment history

09/2021– 02/2023 Copenhagen Business School, Swiss National Science Foundation Fellowship at the Department of Organization with Prof Dr. Silviya Svejenova for the project 'Affective temporality in music production: embodying and spacing time in creative processes' (100%)

02/2016 – 08/2021 University of St. Gallen, research assistance of Prof. Dr. Chris Steyaert at the Research Institute for Organizational Psychology (70%)

- Course assistance and co-teaching
- Co-supervision of Master theses
- Research and publishing activities
- Participation at informal formats such as brown bag meetings, writing group meetings and PhD colloquia, where concerns regarding research activities and publishing are discussed as well as the participation at the diversity and the practice theory conferences organized by the institute

03/2012 – 07/2012 Swiss cancer league, internship in the prevention division (60%)

- Strategic assistant to the managing director of the prevention division. Organization of events and PR-activities, development of a risk assessment strategy for business partnerships, analysis and advancement of the brand strategy for '5 a day'

09/2011 – 08/2012 University of Basel, research assistant in the SNF-project 'Managing Science at Universities' (20%) at the Institute for Science and Technology Studies

- Background research on cases and literature, organization of the workshop sessions with the project partners, administrative work

09/2011 – 02/2012 University of Basel, tutor for the lecture 'Social Theories'

- Instruction and counselling of students in the paper writing process

Institutional work

09/2014 – 09/2017 Board member and (co-)chairwoman of proArte (student art association)

- Board member since 09/2014 and chairwoman since 08/2015
- Development of new strategic projects, overall professionalization of the association as well as the ongoing recruitment of board and project members

10/2014 – 12/2016 Project lead of 'intervention – young artists on campus' at proArte (student art association)

- Conceptualization and implementation of temporary art interventions on the university campus by young Swiss artists who are chosen by a professional jury and framed by a supporting program to stimulate the dialogue between art, science and economy
- Supervision and support of the team (eight people) and overall project processes (marketing / fundraising / artists / event management) as well as the fostering of relationships with key stakeholders (art schools, museums, curators, university administration)

02/2009 – 01/2015 Board member of the Rowing association Baden as executive for internal and external communication

- Editing of the quarterly club newspaper, writing of news paper articles, curating of social media channels, organization of a training camp, designing of advertising campaigns, head of project for the development of a new homepage and new mission statements

Teaching Activities

SS 2020 & SS2021	Creativity: Integrative Portfolio (Bachelor and Master level)
FS 2020	My Favorite Thing: Craft and the Creative Economy (Bachelor level)
SS 2018 – SS 2021	Creativity and Team Dynamics (Master level)
FS 2016 – SS 2021	Organization Studies: Process Theory I & II (Doctoral level)
SS 2016 – SS 2019	Organizational Behavior and Change (Master level)
SS 2016 – FS 2019	Creativity: Organizational Development Seminar Asperitas (Bachelor level)
SS 2016 – SS 2017	Creativity and Entrepreneurship (Master level)
SS 2016	Affects and Emotions in Organizations (Doctoral level)

Memberships in Scientific Societies

06/2021 – 06/2022	ECSB European Council for Small Business and Entrepreneurship
05/2020 – 05/2021	EGOS European Group of Organization Studies
05/2017 – 05/2018	EGOS European Group of Organization Studies

Awards/Scholarships

10/2010– 10/2019 Scholarship of the Swiss Study Foundation

- The foundation merits scholarships to excellent students with a broad interest and engagement in society
- Participation in several interdisciplinary summer schools and network events organized by the foundation, financial support for attending conferences

08/2010 – 01/2019 Erasmus Scholarship

- Financial support for the exchange semester in France

07/2007 Award for the second best A-Levels of the Kantonsschule Wettingen

- From a cohort of 179 students

Personal skills

Languages	German, mother tongue
	English, fluent, C2 (exchange year in South Africa 2004/2005, bilingual Matura D-E, Master and Doctoral thesis in English)
	French, fluent, C1 (6-weeks language learning stay in Lausanne 2007, exchange semester at Université Lille 3 in France 2010 and language course at the University of St. Gallen),
IT-skills	MAXQDA, intermediate (transcription, coding and analysis of qualitative data for the PhD research)
	SPSS, intermediate (quantitative analysis for research projects in social science and biology during the Bachelor degree)
Sports	Rowing (competitive rowing from 2006 – 2010, Bronze medalist at the Swiss rowing championships in 2008 in the 8+)
Arts /Philosophy	Post-structuralism and feminist theory (in particular the works of Foucault, Deleuze, Irigaray, Spinoza, Butler, Bennett, Barad, Grosz, Ahmed)

Publications

Peer reviewed journal papers

Lüthy, Christina & Steyaert, Chris (2019) The onto-politics of entrepreneurial experimentation: re-reading Hans-Jörg Rheinberger's understanding of 'experimental systems'. Entrepreneurship & Regional Development, 31 (7-8) 652- 668.

Peer reviewed book chapters

Lüthy, Christina (2019) Onto-politics in the Making: Exploring the Work of 'Atelier für Sonderaufgaben'. In Riot, Elen; Schnugg, Claudia & Raviola, Elena (Eds.) Arts, Politics and Social Movements: In the Fields and in the Streets. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholar, pp. 97-116.

Peer reviewed conferences

Lüthy, Christina & Steyaert, Chris. Inclusion as an affective sphere: Place-making processes in the cultural and creative industries. 2021. Track: Processual Perspectives on Organizational Space. 37th EGOS Colloquium. Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Lüthy, Christina. Interrupting the fabric of ordinary experience: the affective proceedings politics of cultural entrepreneurship. 2020. Track: Creative Indutries Revisited: Addressing Invisibilities,Inequalities and Injustices. 36th EGOS Colloquium. Hamburg, Germany.

Lüthy, Christina. Encountering vibrant matter: practices of enchantment in art entrepreneurship. 2019. Encountering vibrant matter: practices of enchantment in art entrepreneurship. 2019. Round table: Entrepreneurial issues. Practice based Perspectives in Organizational Psychology. St. Gallen, Switzerland.

Lüthy, Christina. The redistribution of the sensible along an art enterprise: Practicing embodied politics for entrepreneuring social change. 2019. Track: Critical Entrepreneurship Studies: Destabilizing and Transgressing Mainstream Entrepreneurship. 11th International CMS Critical Management Studies Conference. Milton Keynes, UK.

Lüthy, Christina. 'Presensing' the intensities of entrepreneuring: Tracing relational affect in embodied research of art entrepreneurship. 2018. Track: Feeling the Field: Emotions in Qualitative Research. Unspoken, Unseen, Unheard of. Unexplored Realities in Qualitative Research. St. Gallen, Switzerland.

Lüthy, Christina. The triple space of the experimental: A conceptual contribution along and beyond H.-J. Rheinberger. 2017. Track: Experimenting Organization: Becoming by Doing. 33rd EGOS Colloquium. Copenhagen, Denmark.