

# ***Æstetisk Seminar***

**Sara Malou Strandvad**

## **From fields and worlds to a multiplicity of spheres? Theorizing cultural production in the 21st century**

Digitalization, internationalization, and mass education have radically transformed art production. Yet, sociologists of the arts continue to promote conceptual models developed in bounded national spaces with analogous social interactions and clear internal power dynamics. The most dominant approaches in the sociology of the arts have long been inspired by Pierre Bourdieu and Howard S. Becker. Bourdieu's work on the production of culture, presented in *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (1993) and *The Rules of Art: Genesis and Structure of the Literary Field* (1996), and Becker's *Art Worlds* (1982) remain the cornerstones in cultural production studies. These works have been essential in defining what the sociology of the arts is, demonstrating how artists and their work are made by the social worlds in which they exist. Nevertheless, these perspectives have also been criticized for their dated empirical foundations and for ignoring the affective properties of the art that is made. Bourdieu's fields of cultural production concept is mapped on the French literary field of the late 19th century, and Becker's notion of art worlds is based on the 1940s Chicago jazz scene. Both highlight the importance of social conventions: they demonstrate how conventions are maintained and how they steer cultural production processes.

Using contemporary artist residencies as an empirical case study, including publicly funded intercontinental network collaborations and a myriad of self-organized initiatives, this presentation takes some first steps towards a new conceptualization of the multiplicity of social spheres in the arts in the twenty-first century. By unpacking how residencies embody constructive institutional critiques that counterbalance the notoriously precarious work in the arts and promote global mobility, diversity and sustainability, the presentation offers 'ecologies of artistic production' as an alternative, moving us toward a transnational approach centered on artistic projects in-the-making.

**Torsdag den 5. december 2024, Kl. 14:15**

**Kasernen, bygning 1584, lokale 124**

Alle er velkomne/All are welcome