



Universität der Künste Berlin

Institut für Kunst im Kontext

Rubén A. Gaztambide-Fernández

**Creation, Participation, and the
Political Life of Cultural Production**

Vortrag

Donnerstag, den 27.10.2016

19:00 Uhr, Raum 308

Institut für Kunst im Kontext

Einsteinufer 43-53, 10587 Berlin

In this talk, Gaztambide-Fernández draws from his research on the experiences of secondary students in public arts schools as well as his participatory action research with young immigrants and Indigenous students in Toronto public schools in order to offer examples of what it means to approach arts education from a cultural production paradigm. Building on his critique of the "rhetoric of effect" in arts education, Gaztambide-Fernández elaborates on the notion of cultural production as a framework for thoughtful arts education and advocacy. Rather than seeing issues of equity, access, and social justice as outcomes or as problems to be solved, his framework takes these issues as points of departure where "difference" and the "difference that difference makes" become starting points for creative symbolic work. The presentation will elaborate on the notion that creation and participation are intimately linked, whether implicitly or explicitly, and that only an understanding of this link can yield a rationale for the centrality of cultural production in education and for the pursuit of social justice goals.

Rubén A. Gaztambide-Fernández is associate professor at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OSIE) at the University of Toronto. His research and scholarship are concerned with questions of symbolic boundaries, the dynamics of cultural production, and processes of identification in educational contexts. He draws on cultural studies, postcolonial and feminist theory, and critical sociology to inform his understanding of curriculum and pedagogy as encounters with difference. His current research focuses on the experiences of students attending specialised arts program in public high schools in cities across Canada and the United States. He is also the principal investigator of Youth Solidarities Across Boundaries, a participatory action research project with Latino/a immigrants and Indigenous youth in Toronto. His theoretical work focuses on the relationship between creativity, decolonisation, and solidarity. His book *The Best of the Best: Becoming Elite at an American Boarding School* (2009, Harvard University Press) is based on two years of ethnographic research at an elite boarding school in the United States. He is also co-editor with Adam Howard of *Educating Elites: Class Privilege and Educational Advantage* (2010, Rowman & Littlefield).